



A. E. Wilding.

Thurso

Norman E. Brooks

# THE COMPLETE LAWN TENNIS PLAYER

BY

A. WALLIS MYERS

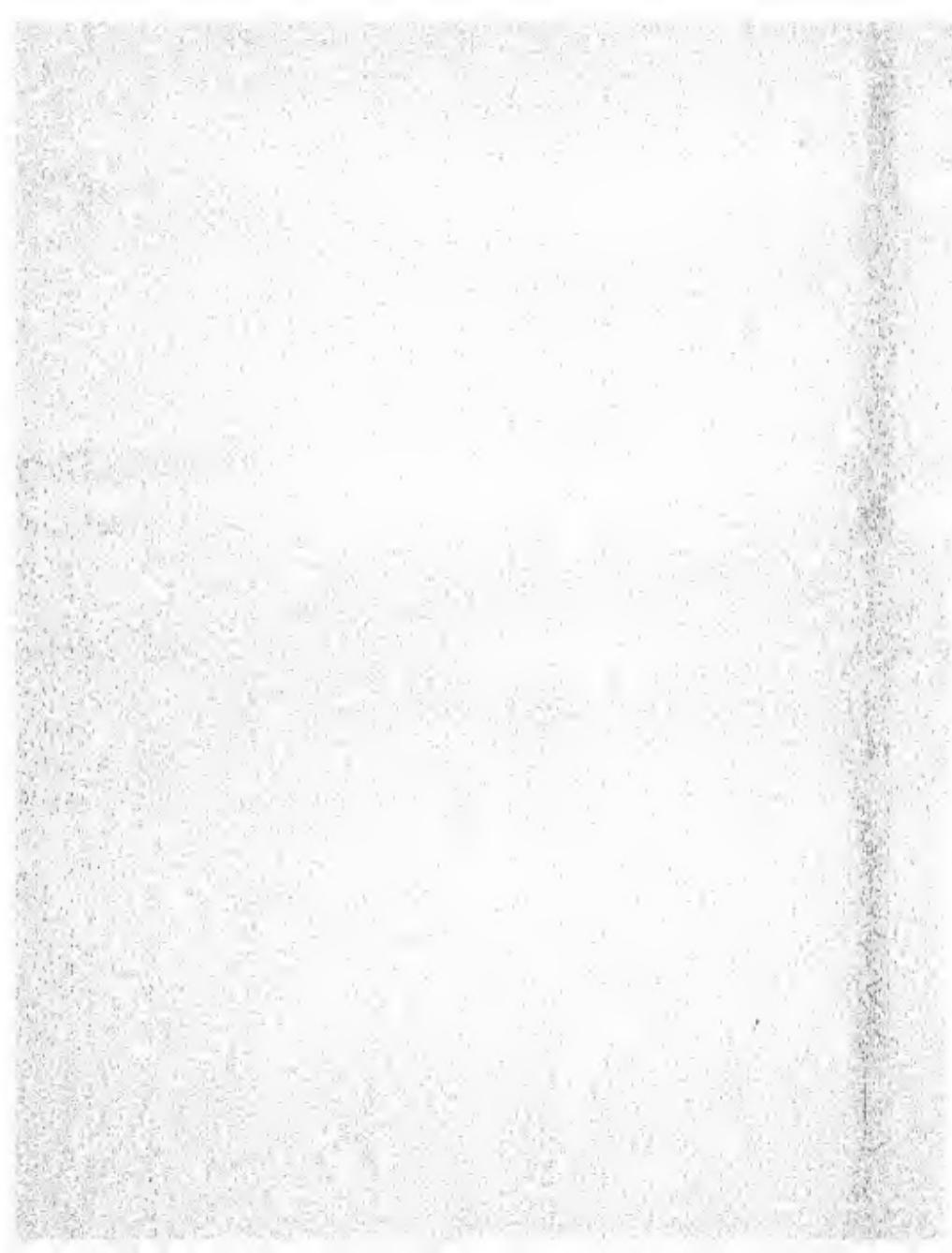
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To V



## PREFACE

WHEN this volume was contemplated, three objects were kept in view. The first was to demonstrate the evolution and organisation of a game which, in the short space of thirty years, has claimed more votaries and founded more clubs the world over than any other outdoor pastime in existence. The second was to treat methods of play, their developments and their results, their physiological and their psychological aspects, in such manner that both the beginner and the more experienced might derive some benefit. The third was to entertain, with the traditions and the *ana* of lawn tennis and with memories of some of its best-known exponents, that large army which wields the racket in many lands.

In the more or less didactic chapters, those dealing with strokes in the making, I have received invaluable assistance from the Rev. A. E. Crawley, Headmaster of Derby School, who has made a profound study of their technique and whose practical experience as a player began in the days of Willie Renshaw. The exposition of the principles underlying the American service, its varieties and its complexities, is only one of the contributions in this section for which my acknowledgments to Mr. Crawley are due. These I very gratefully tender.

I am indebted to Canon Hartley, Mr. E. G. Meers, Mr. H. S. Scrivener, Mr. W. H. Collins, Mr. Roper Barrett, Mr. Archdale Palmer and others, for various historical data and for personal recollections of events and contemporaries of which they have had intimate knowledge; to Mr. G. L. Orme for the several plans he prepared, and for his information relating to covered courts; to Mr. Reginald Beale, of Messrs. James Carter & Co., for practical advice on the making and maintenance of grass courts; to the officials of Foreign and Colonial organisations for facts relating to the game in their countries; to Mr. Scrivener and Mr. Charles Voigt for their remarks on handicapping; and to the Badminton volume and Mr. Wilfred Baddeley's all too brief manual.

Finally, I have to acknowledge the kindness, exercised I am afraid at some personal inconvenience, of Mr. Norman Brookes and M. Max Décugis, two of the leading players whose strokes Mr. George Beldam's inimitable camera, working at an exposure of  $\frac{1}{100}$ th fraction of a second, has so graphically delineated. A large number of the seventy action-photographs here reproduced were specially taken for this volume, and I do not doubt they will enhance what success it may achieve.

A. W. M.

ASHTEAD

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# THE COMPLETE LAWN TENNIS PLAYER

## CHAPTER I

### ENTER LAWN TENNIS!

A mysterious birth and a struggling infancy—Major Wingfield's conception of a court—The All England Club as foster-parent—A game of patience, or pitch and toss—Laws made at Wimbledon—The All England Club as autocrat—The story of the L.T.A.'s advent—Concerning the first championship and its winner—A stroke that evoked an uproar—"Passing by the Ladies"—Some recollections of Canon Hartley—The evolution of the racket—A stitch that took some time to find

THE career of lawn tennis is somewhat akin to that of a nameless foundling who, buffeted and burked in early life, achieves by dint of inherent virtues and a good constitution, fortune and world-wide celebrity. What its lineage was, who were its progenitors, how it survived the manifold struggles of its youth, are mysteries which no man has convincingly solved. That the game had a less strenuous existence in another age and in another form there is some evidence to suppose. Somersetshire men, in a square green court, we are told,<sup>1</sup> before Queen Elizabeth's windows, "did hang up lines, squaring out the form of a tennis court, and making

<sup>1</sup> Badminton volume.

a cross line in the middle"; and in this square with handball, bord and cord played "to the great liking of Her Highness." As far back as the end of the eighteenth century "field tennis" is mentioned as a dangerous rival even to cricket, and when the late Queen came to the throne a pastime described as

"long tennis" was in existence. Nor is it less certain that a game, called *la longue paume*, the object of which was to strike a cork ball over a bank of mud, had some vogue in France several centuries ago, or that in Russia, of more recent date, a game similar in principle to modern lawn tennis was practised.

By many people, as Mr. C. G. Heathcote observes, lawn tennis was assumed to have sprung "like Minerva

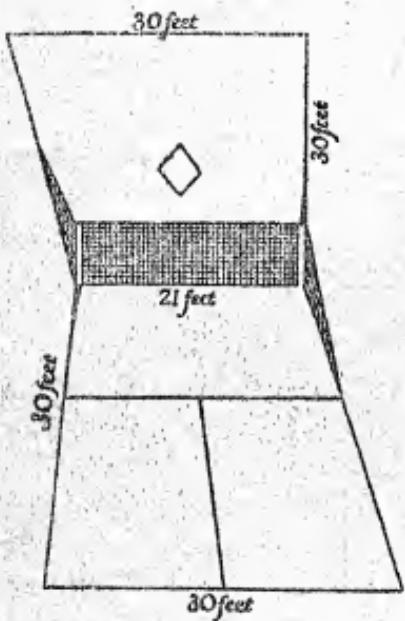


Diagram of Major Wingfield's Original Court.

from the head of Jove, fully grown and equipped with the newest pattern of racket and the last championship ball in or about the year 1874." This is probably only a convenient modern legend, but there is some excuse for its circulation in that at a Christmas party in 1873 one, Major Wingfield, introduced into a country house at Nantclwyd, a game

called *Sphairistikè*, which, though probably a lineal descendant of a former pastime, was sufficiently novel to excite interest and attract votaries. The Major's conception of a playing area, first marked out with tape and pegged with hair-pins, does not bear much resemblance to the present court. It was shaped like an hour-glass ; that is to say, the width of the court at its base was more than the width at the net, which was no less than 5 feet high at the posts and only 4 inches lower in the centre. On one side the court had a line at an undefined distance from the net, which was bisected by a centre line running parallel to the side lines. On the other side of the net, however, there were no dividing lines, but only a little diamond-shaped compartment in which the server stood to project the light india-rubber ball over the net. Racket scoring was adopted. The first disciples of this gentle pastime appear to have much appreciated the fun, some indeed even contemplating its pursuit on ice!<sup>1</sup> But *Sphairistikè*, with its ungainly name (shortened by the scornful to "Sticky") and its hour-glass court did not long survive in its original form. It retired in favour of a more practical pastime founded on its principles. Once wrought into acceptable shape this pastime was to make itself known in almost every civilised land and ultimately to become the only really cosmopolitan game in existence.

The history of lawn tennis may be said to have been written on the courts of the All England Club at Wimbledon. To this famous battle-ground, hallowed by thirty-one championship meetings, have

<sup>1</sup> Badminton volume.

come the skilled warriors of all nations. Round its centre court, the classic arena in which every champion from William Renshaw to Norman Brookes has won the blue riband of the lawn, thousands have watched and cheered the prowess of international heroes. An enduring monument to the progress and evolution of lawn tennis, the club has survived all changes in the laws as well as in the methods of the game. It has stood the test of adversity ; in prosperity it has been prudent. Its fabric has proved invulnerable alike to the open assault of the builder and to the more insidious sapping of the detractor. Its exchequer has withstood all the vicissitudes of fortune through which the championships have passed and is now replenished by the profits of recent gala years. Attracting Society to its tournaments, it has entertained Royalty and received the personal patronage of the Prince of Wales, its first president and the donor of one of its chief trophies. The Mecca of all lovers and students of lawn tennis, Wimbledon has been both the centre of its universe and its most potent educational force.

I have said that the history of lawn tennis has been inscribed on the courts of Wimbledon. If the members of this club did not actually create the game they at least nourished and protected it in early infancy, guided its footsteps in youth and brought it to a maturity which has developed and actualised its possibilities in strokes and in tactics as well as in general organisation. And though twenty years ago the legislative government of lawn tennis passed into the hands of a National Association—

not without some heartburning on the part of its former guardians—I do not think anyone will deny that, practically speaking, the All England Club was its foster-parent.

Yet lawn tennis was not the first child of the All England Club. It had another, upon which the younger, to advance its own ends, may be said to have committed fratricide. The name of this first child was Croquet, and as the All England Croquet Club the leading institution connected with lawn tennis first drew breath. That was in the winter of 1869, when the promoters<sup>1</sup> secured the present site off the Worple Road, Wimbledon, on a lease of seven years and at a rental of £120 per annum, plus a proportion of club subscriptions and gate money. It may be mentioned, in view of the world-wide celebrity this ground was subsequently to achieve, that several other districts were proposed and considered, including the Crystal Palace, the Toxophilite Society's ground, a site adjoining the old Prince's Racquet Club and the "fields between Holland House, Kensington, and Addison Road."<sup>2</sup> The first croquet meeting held on the ground in 1871 does not seem to have caused a sensation, two commissioners and one policeman being deemed adequate to control the crowd and the players. A year later efforts were made to purchase the ground,

<sup>1</sup> The All England Croquet Club was actually conceived in the summer of 1868, the following being prominently associated with its formation:—Capt. R. F. Dalton, J. Hindo Hale, Rev. A. Law, Mr. S. H. C. Maddock, Mr. J. H. Walsh, Mr. W. J. Whitmore, Mr. E. B. Michell, Rev. D. I. Heath, Rev. H. W. Miller Henry and Mr. Daniel Jones.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the club.

the value being estimated at £2500; but, beyond an offer by a clergyman to advance £2000 on mortgage, nothing tangible resulted. But in 1873 the lease of the premises was revised. There had been a deficit, the rental was reduced to £100 and the subscriptions raised. We may accordingly assume the club was then disposed to seek new sources of revenue. Lawn tennis in its primitive form was casting a spell over society—every owner of a private lawn, uprooting his croquet hoops, was sampling its attractions—and the committee succumbed to its charms. In 1875 a resolution of the club decreed that "a ground should be set apart for lawn tennis and badminton during the season" and a sub-committee of three<sup>1</sup> was appointed to plant the tender sapling, the sum of £25 being sanctioned for initial outlay. The sub-committee was likewise requested to draw up the necessary regulations. Here their troubles began. At that time the game was floundering in the turmoiled waters which Major Wingfield's invention had set in motion. The rules were not more satisfactory than the shape of the court. The length of the net was 6 feet shorter than the length of the base line, the service line 26 feet from the net. The height of the net was 4 feet at the centre and 5 feet at the posts. Racquet scoring was still in use; there were no such things as sets; "deuce" and "advantage" with one innings only did not arrive until "fourteen all." A code of laws, just issued by the Tennis Committee of the M.C.C. but apparently flouted in other parts of the country, ordained, *inter alia*, that "balls bound with white

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. J. D. Heath, C. F. Dalton and Henry Jones.

cloth *may* be used in fine weather," and in regard to handicaps "that a cord may be stretched between the posts at a height of 7 feet, or any other height agreed upon, and the giver of odds shall play every ball over the cord or lose a stroke." A game of patience or pitch and toss, suggests Mr. W. M. Brownlee, would aptly describe it.

But a more enlightened age was dawning. Early in 1877, at a special general meeting, the title of the club was altered to the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club and a few weeks later came the announcement of the first championship meeting. Mr. J. H. Walsh had induced the proprietors of the *Field* to offer for competition a silver challenge cup valued at twenty-five guineas. There was no lack of enthusiasm among intending competitors. But there *was* lacking a constructive code of rules which should evolve order out of chaos and conformity out of confusion. Three experts, members of the club, were accordingly delegated to put their heads together. They were Mr. C. G. Heathcote, a brother of the famous amateur tennis champion; Mr. Julian Marshall, a well known tennis player<sup>1</sup> and authority; and the late Mr. Henry Jones, compiler of many codes and well-known under the pseudonym of "Cavendish." These gentlemen, the real pioneers of the present game, drew up a provisional set of rules, subsequently confirmed and adopted by the M.C.C.<sup>2</sup> They provided for the court to be rectangular, its length to be 78 feet and its breadth 27 feet; for the service line to be

<sup>1</sup> Then secretary of the club.

<sup>2</sup> Seven thousand copies of the revised rules had a rapid sale.

26 feet from the net; for the net to be lowered to 3 feet 3 inches at the centre and 5 feet at the posts; for the posts to be placed a yard outside the side lines, and for tennis scoring to be adopted. This code differed so widely from any existing code as to constitute practically a new game. And we may note in passing that subsequent alterations which experience deemed necessary invariably originated with the All England Club. During the first few years these revisions were submitted to the M.C.C.; ultimately that august body, recognising that the code and its emendations belonged in truth to the A.E.C. alone, waived all claims to be consulted.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter the club marched boldly forward. It issued periodically fresh editions of the laws—with such alterations as were necessary, the last fundamental change being the lowering of the net at the posts to 3 feet 6 inches in 1883—down to the year 1889, when it voluntarily transferred its rights in this respect and in that of the regulations of prize meetings to the newly-founded Lawn Tennis Association.

A word may be introduced here about the formation of the governing body to which is now directly affiliated forty associations, fifty-five tournament committees and two hundred and seventy-six clubs. Six years before its official inception the movement in favour of a National Association had begun and more than one conference was held; but the All England Club, jealous of its traditions and of its legislative powers, was not then disposed to smile on the efforts of the promoters. It was not

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Daniel Jones.

until Mr. H. S. Scrivener and Mr. G. W. Hillyard —strangely enough the present referee and secretary of the championships at Wimbledon— issued a circular letter convening a representative gathering of lawn tennis supporters from all parts of the country that the L.T.A. was formally inaugurated. Recalling this event Mr. Scrivener writes:— “In those days the All England Club was like the M.C.C. and rather a contemptuous autocrat. In the opinion of many it was Wimbledon first and the rest nowhere. This is why the more distant centres in the North and Midlands were on the reform side. Moreover, the agitation was fostered by the fact that the club had a secretary<sup>1</sup> who was rather a dictatorial sort of person. The A.E.L.T.C. ruled lawn tennis and he ruled the club. The thing that set me going was a reply to some perfectly reasonable application in connexion with the 'Varsity match which, I fancy, clashed with the Wimbledon meeting, or something of that kind. The secretary wrote back a curt *non possumus* of about four lines, signed with a hieroglyph which was barely decipherable as 'J. M. sec.', as if all the world was expected to know what this meant. Hillyard's connexion with the movement was mainly due to the fact that in those days there was much press criticism of women playing in public (times have changed!). Mrs. Hillyard was of course included, and there were a good many who wished to see the Ladies' Championship moved away to

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. Julian Marshall who, affirms Mr. Wilberforce, had for long managed the affairs of the All England Club with much success.

some place where there would be less publicity. He was also, like myself, generally in sympathy with the movement. Our circular brought a number of favourable replies and we accordingly decided to convene a meeting to discuss the question whether an association should be formed or not. We sent out a lot of invitations, but by some unfortunate accident, for while Hillyard blamed a housemaid and the housemaid doubtless blamed the cat, a good many clubs whom we meant to invite, including the A.E.L.T.C., did not get invitations. I was only an undergraduate of twenty-two then and did not realise the value of checking lists, not only of what *I* did but of others' work as well. However, there was no secret about it; we gave notice of the meeting in *Pastime*<sup>1</sup> and invited everybody interested to attend. Henry Jones made great capital of our omission and generally tried to snuff us out, but fully two-thirds of those present (I should say) were determined to have an association and also to form it there and then, and in the end they got their way." It has only to be added that once the Lawn Tennis Association became *fait accompli* the All England Club frankly gave it support and allegiance, and, as we have seen, abdicated its functions as the legislative authority. The relations between the two bodies have on the whole remained cordial and co-operative, though occasionally (and especially in the last few years) the more radical members of the council, unimpressed by the traditions of the premier club, have demanded and in some instances secured,

<sup>1</sup> The weekly lawn tennis journal.

constitutional changes. But dissensions great or small in the council chamber have had little or no effect in stemming the onward progress of the game.

As to the first championship meeting held in 1877, we know that spectators were present because the minutes record that the chairs hired for the occasion were "taken in exchange for the large roller and fine old mowing-machine plus four guineas." But we also know that for three days nobody came near the ground, on two days because of the Eton and Harrow match over which the meeting was adjourned and on one because of rain. There were twenty-two competitors of whom many were real tennis players, and the best—Mr. Spencer Gore who won the title comfortably—an old Harrovian and racquet player. Mr. Heathcote says that Mr. Gore's volley, which was his own invention, was no mere pat over the net. The first to realise the necessity of forcing his opponent to the back line, he would approach the net and by a dexterous turn of the wrist return the ball at considerable speed. Mr. Gore himself, referring to the meeting, points out<sup>1</sup> that the real tennis player had every advantage: "the net was high at the sides, which encouraged the player to play from corner to corner as at tennis, rather than straight down the side lines; and the service line was so far from the net as to give the heavily cut tennis service a great advantage." Very different was the first meeting in 1877 to that thirty years later. But one court was used—it was obscurely placed

<sup>1</sup> Badminton volume.

near the railway. The umpiring was apparently somewhat casual, two gentlemen perched on wooden tables being engaged for one match, sometimes conferring with each other across the length of the net before a final decision was given. The majority of the players, we are told, delivered a round-hand service which, though it had some pace, was not very formidable. Nevertheless, its efficacy even under the conditions then prevailing was such that of the six hundred and one games contested in the tournament, three hundred and seventy-six were won by the server.

Before the second championship meeting was held the All England legislators had been at work again and with a view to curtailing the advantage held by the server the net was lowered 3 inches both at the posts and in the centre.<sup>1</sup> The service line was also reduced 4 feet. These changes may be said to have introduced the "pat-ball era" and temporarily killed the volley. "The rests were interminable and were not very interesting," says an eye-witness. "It was quite possible to take a country-walk after a rest began and get back in time to see the end of it." The winner of the second championship, Mr. P. F. Hadow, defeated Mr. Gore by simply tossing the ball over his head. The latter appears to have practically "sat on the net." Indeed so close was he on one occasion that,

<sup>1</sup> In 1880 the height of the net at the posts was reduced to 4 feet, the service line was brought in to 21 feet from the net, the server was allowed the option of having both feet on the service line instead of being compelled to place one foot beyond it, the prescribed variations in the size of the ball were amended and other variations of the laws adopted.

stretching his racket over the net, he volleyed a ball that had not crossed it. The stroke evoked an uproar, but was eventually given in his favour on the ground that a player had a right to hold his racket anywhere he could reach.<sup>1</sup> At one stage in the third set both men were so exhausted that it was all but decided to adjourn for a day's rest!

Any fears then entertained that the fires of lawn tennis burning at Wimbledon would die down for lack of fuel proved imaginary. From twenty-two competitors in 1877 the entry rose to thirty-four in 1878, and in 1879 there were forty-five aspirants for the championship. Among these were H. F. Lawford, who had won the third prize the previous year, and the twin brothers Renshaw, then Cheltenham boys eighteen years of age—names that in the next decade were destined to leave an indelible imprint on the annals of the game. The twins, for some reason or other, did not appear in person on this occasion. The programme, it may be noted, was augmented by an additional event—a club handicap sweep-stake; but the offer of a member to present a ladies' cup value £8 was not accepted, the decision eliciting a protest from the would-be donor, who wrote: "I cannot but think the committee ungallant in passing by the ladies. They would, I think, come in time!" In point of fact the ladies gave signal proof of their advancing prowess the same year in Dublin, where for the first time a championship reserved for their sex was instituted.

A propos of the championships of 1879, 1880, 1881, I have been furnished with the following

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Brownlee.

interesting recollections by Canon J. T. Hartley, winner on the two first occasions:—"I was living in Yorkshire when lawn tennis was first invented and at once recognised the great value of the game as being akin to the fine games of tennis and racquets, and yet being accessible to all who had a good lawn. I had been fond of both these games and won some distinction at Harrow and Oxford. Of course this made me keen about lawn tennis when it was started. I had no idea, however, that I was any real good until I met one of the Taborers who had played at Wimbledon, and defeated him fairly easily. He persuaded me to try my luck there the next year (1879) which I did. I had one very hard match with a man named Erskine, a fine player, but just won. Not having expected to live through to the end I had made no provision for my Sunday duty in Yorkshire. So I had to come home on Saturday, breakfast very early on Monday morning, drive ten miles to a station, get to London at two, and to Wimbledon just in time to play—rather tired by my journey and want of a meal. I nearly lost that game, the semi-final against Parr, but fortunately it came on to rain. We stopped, I got some tea, felt much refreshed and finished off all right. The next day I played 'St. Leger,' the now notorious Goold of Monte Carlo fame. He was then a cheery, wild Irishman, Irish champion, and a very pretty player. I think he volleyed more than any of us that year; but there was some weakness I suppose in his play, as being fit and well after a night's rest I won three sets straight off.

"The play then was much more moulded upon

real tennis than it is now. There was much careful play off the ground and placing of the ball. The hitting was not so hard as in later times. Neither Gore nor Hadow, two former champions, played in 1879.

"In 1880 I defended the cup against Lawford who had won the All-Comers!<sup>1</sup> We had a hard game. I won three sets to one. We both played almost entirely off the ground. This was not, as it has been said, because we could not volley. Perhaps in after years in private games nobody volleyed much more than I did. It was because we thought it the safest game, having in our minds as I said before real tennis, chaces on the floor and so on.

"The year afterwards I was unfortunate. Coming up to Cheam to stay with the Tabors and to get a little practice, I started an attack of English cholera, which went on until after the championship, reduced me a stone in weight and made me very weak as well as stopping almost all practice. So my game with W. Renshaw was a farce. I ought not to have played it at all. I could never have beaten W. Renshaw, but fit and well I could, of course, have played him a much better game. After that I took to volleying and certainly played a stronger game than when I won the championship;<sup>2</sup> but I was the wrong side of thirty, got no real good practice up at Bedale and so never *really* attempted any public play afterwards."

<sup>1</sup> In a preceding match between Mr. Lawford and Mr. E. Lubbock at Prince's a rest of no less than eighty-one strokes was witnessed.

<sup>2</sup> Canon Hartley, with Mr. J. T. Richardson, won the championship doubles in 1882.

The racket in use at this period was designed after the fashion of the real tennis racket and was curved in the head, grotesquely curved according to modern ideas. Indeed, one of the earliest rackets of all which Mr. Tate has in his possession and which may be seen in the accompanying illustration, has a playing surface only about half the size of the present area and a handle covered with white leather, proportionately thinner. When the limitations of the real tennis stroke with its horizontal movement were realised and the game was developed in other directions, mainly in the employment of the vertical stroke, the face of the racket simultaneously broadened and became more uniform. Mr. Lawford, whose forte was a fierce forehand drive from the back of the court, naturally coveted a substantial, broad-faced weapon, and it was at his suggestion, I believe, that the first "straight" racket was made by Mr. Tate.<sup>1</sup> The Renshaws, however, remained almost exclusively loyal to a slight curve; and until they retired their faith was reflected in others. One may note that there is not, and never has been, any rule limiting the size or weight of the racket. To-day if any daring spirit went into court at an open meeting armed with an original racket or with an implement twice the orthodox dimensions none could say him nay.

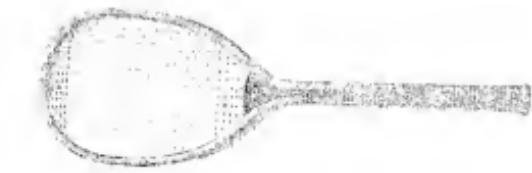
As to the ball, the first used was soft and uncovered. It was Mr. J. M. Heathcote in the seventies who discovered that balls covered with white flannel were better able to control and had a more uniform bound. For some time the seams were stitched

<sup>1</sup> The head has since been slightly narrowed.



1574

1575



1575

THE EVOLUTION OF THE RACKET  
1575

1576



1577



1578



1579



outside, and it was again Mr. Lawford at whose suggestion the inside seam was adopted. Playing on the now defunct asphalt court at Wimbledon in winter, the ex-champion found that the old ball did not always bounce true on the hard surface. The late Mr. F. H. Ayres made several experiments with thread, catgut and what not to satisfy Mr. Lawford's requirements. Boxes of sample balls would be sent down to Mr. Lawford's house. Until Mr. Ayres finally triumphed, the punctilious champion was wont to send each consignment back with some such laconic message as "burn them." Characteristic of Mr. Lawford!

## CHAPTER II

### ANNALS OF WIMBLEDON

The glorious reign of Renshaw—The brothers make their début and are beaten—William Renshaw wins a love set against Lawford in eleven minutes—Spectacles that "formed the highwater mark of lawn tennis"—Inauguration of the doubles and the ladies' championships—A young girl who created a record and a sensation—The relative merits of the Renshaws—Pim *v.* Wilfred Baddeley—Profits diminish—Mr. E. G. Meers gives his impressions of the early nineties and incidentally relates some stories—Championships lost by one stroke—The ten years' reign of the Dohertys—Frank Roseley plays like one inspired—Norman Brookes comes and conquers—Miss May Sutton fulfils a prophecy—Looking forward.

THE influence which William Renshaw exercised over lawn tennis in general and Wimbledon in particular cannot be overestimated. He came into the arena at a time when the game seemed to have reached the limits of its expansion; save for a perfect and mechanical precision in strokes off the ground there was apparently no further scope for advance and enterprise. Renshaw was the agent by which, as Mr. Heathcote observes, lawn tennis asserted an individuality it had not previously possessed, shook itself free from the trammels of racquets and tennis and entered seriously on the development of individual principles and tactics. For six years he remained absolutely invincible; for seven his name was inscribed on the champion-

ship roll. His unparagoned skill, his bustling methods, his rapidity of movement and his dashing personality drew and fascinated crowds for a decade. No champion in any sport ever had such an enthusiastic following, no player of this or any other day was so sought after by tournament committees, and no man is more closely identified with the rise of the racket.

Before me lies a dilapidated programme (a single card, priced at sixpence) of the 1880 championship meeting at which William and Ernest Renshaw made their bow at Wimbledon. William won his first two rounds in three straight sets and was then drawn to play O. E. Woodhouse, reputed to be the first man who ever volleyed.<sup>1</sup> I like the impression which the late Herbert Chipp has given :

"The Irish champion—Renshaw had just won the title for the first time—secured the opening set; but that was the length of his tether. Woodhouse, who was a remarkably fine player—he joined the majority early, alas!—won the next three sets and the match! At no time after the first set did Renshaw appear at his ease. He had a fall or two on the slippery ground, took off his shoes, played in his stocking soles, put the shoes on again, then tried another pair (I believe he had no 'steel points' with him)—all to no purpose. It was clearly not his day and in no disparagement of Woodhouse's display, which was an excellent one, I muttered to myself, 'But what came ye out for to see?' Quite well do I remember Ernest Renshaw standing on the bank above the court (he had just disposed of his man) looking moodily on at his brother's vain attempts

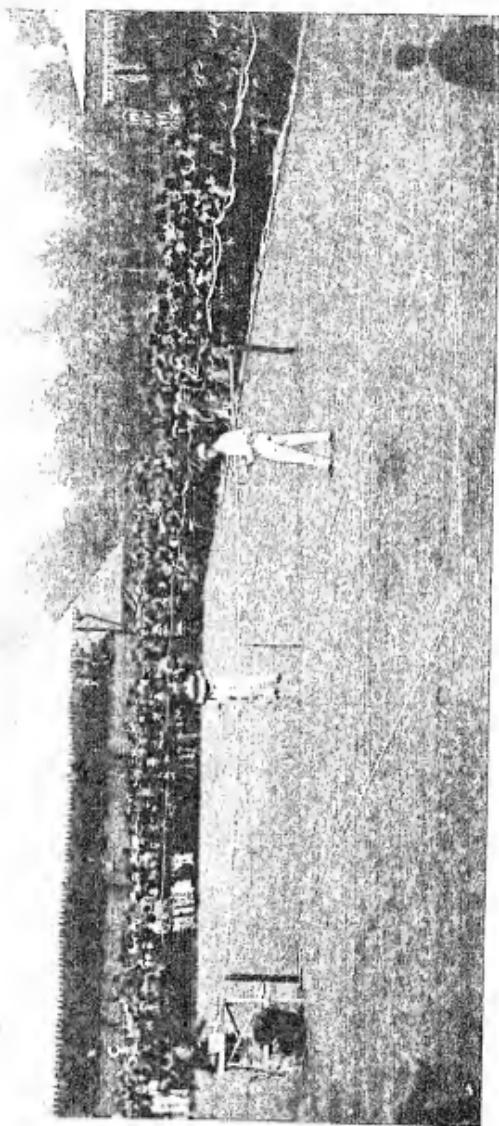
<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wilberforce.

to stem the tide of defeat. Had he a presentiment he would share his brother's fate on the morrow at the hands of the same player?"<sup>1</sup>

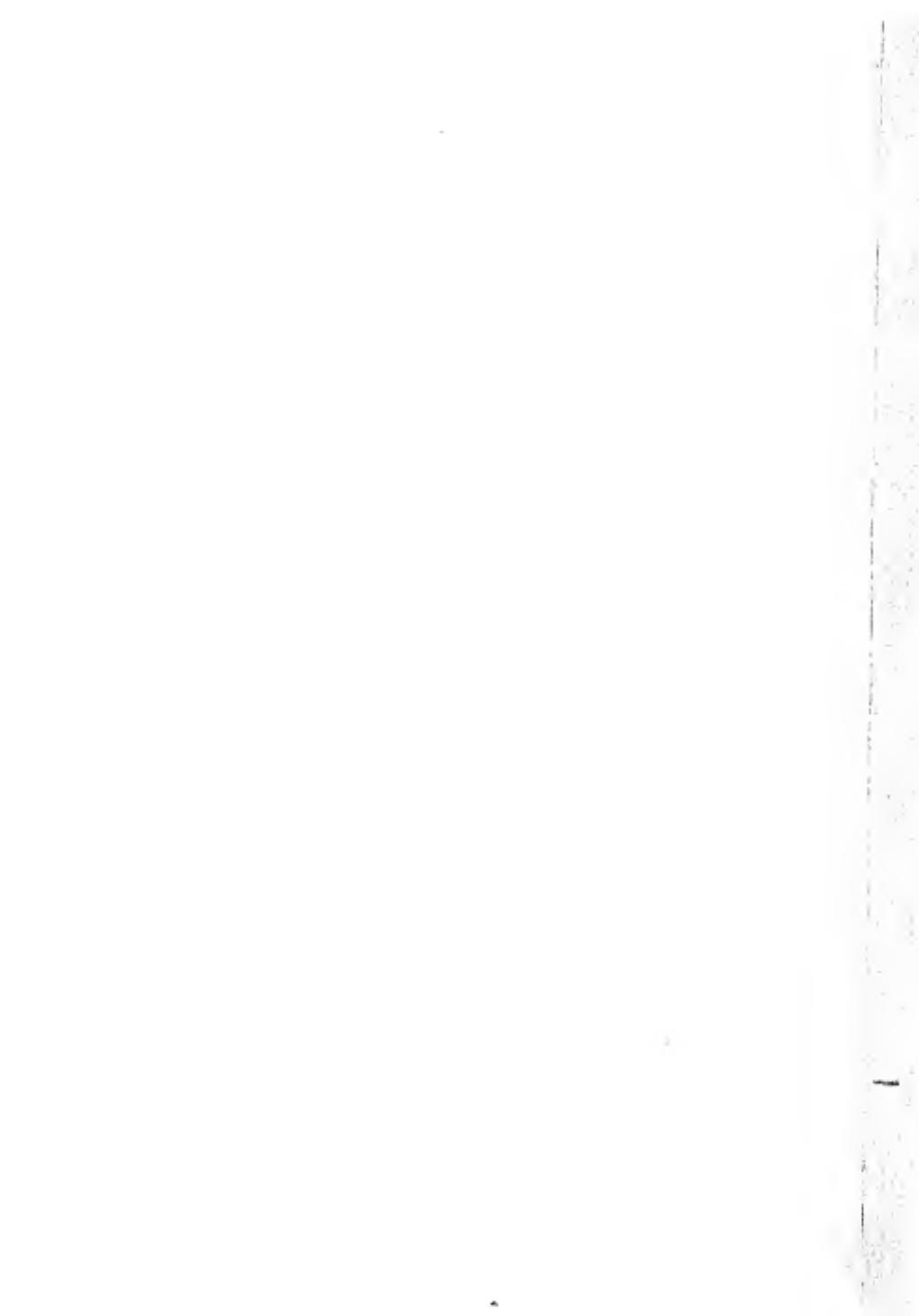
During the seven years Renshaw dominated Wimbledon—and every other tournament at which he appeared besides—his strenuous fights with H. F. Lawford stand out as an ever-memorable feature. Ernest Renshaw had been his brother's challenger in 1882 and 1883, but for the next three years the twin had to face the onslaught of the great base-liner—fierce encounters that sent the denizens of Mayfair, the clubs and the City in special trains to Wimbledon<sup>2</sup> and caused a stupendous boom in lawn tennis. It is said that half a sovereign was once paid for standing room on a couple of bricks! "Well I remember the first meeting between these giants," says Mr. Chipp, "and how the holder electrified everybody by the rapidity of his scoring. He won a love set in eleven minutes, and in that set there was practically only one man in the court." Renshaw took the second also, but not nearly so comfortably, and it was evident that the vigour of his attack was declining. The third set was entered upon amid breathless silence. "Lawford had by no means abandoned hope—he never did. Twice he said to me as he passed (I was taking the farther side line), 'If I can only win this set the match is mine!' However, Renshaw, although tiring rapidly and forced now to play on the defensive, was able to reach seven-all. Pulling himself together for a supreme

<sup>1</sup> Woodhouse beat E. Renshaw by three sets to one.

<sup>2</sup> Three thousand five hundred spectators witnessed the Renshaw Lawford match in 1885.



WIMBLEDON IN 1881: WILLIAM RENSHAW v. ERNEST RENSHAW IN THE CHALLENGE ROUND OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP.



effort he scored the next two games with the loss of only two strokes and thus rendered secure his position as premier player."

The demeanour and deportment of the two warriors were very different. H. S. Scrivener mentions that Renshaw gave an index to his highly strung temperament in the quickness of his movement and speech and in the rapidity with which he played. "He never waited between the sets if he could help it, changing ends at a brisk walk and doing his best (without any suspicion of bustling) to keep his opponent and the ball going at the same time. Lawford being a big, powerful man, was naturally slower in his movements. But in spite of slight manifestations of impatience on Renshaw's part and mild protests on the part of Lawford at the rate at which the second service succeeded the first, these battles were fought out with the utmost good temper on both sides. Nothing finer in lawn tennis has ever been seen than the dogged stubbornness of Lawford. Even when leading he fought for every ace; for he knew that with Renshaw he was never safe; and his knowledge was absolutely sound. Often as he got within measurable distance of winning during those six years, it was always Renshaw who in the end came out on top—a man who like all really great players, had something in reserve for a crisis." Chipp inclined to the belief that as a spectacle these encounters formed the high-water mark of lawn tennis—a pronouncement certainly indisputable in regard to the epoch which they adorned. I can well believe that it required a considerable amount

of nerve to stand up against Lawford, more terrifying to second-class players than the champion himself. A contemporary describes him as a "grim, determined player, with a sardonic smile, who neither asked for nor gave quarter, whose arm never seemed to tire and whose attack was crushing to a degree." In his early matches Lawford wore a striped football jersey, a porkpie cap to match, and knickerbockers. Subsequently he changed the first two for less conspicuous articles, but nothing would ever make him substitute trousers for knickers.

As an index to the importance and popularity which the championship had assumed in the early eighties, it may be mentioned that the advertising charges rose in one year from £6 to £90, while the committee as the result of the increased gate money were able to erect a permanent grand-stand, recommend the purchase of the ground for £3000, increase the admission fee from one shilling to half a crown and order medals to be struck for past, present and future champions. Efforts were made to push croquet to the wall, and in 1882 its early demise was hinted at in the annual report. The receipts at the three last croquet championship meetings had yielded no more than seven shillings in each year. "It is evident," affirmed this document, "the public no longer take any interest in croquet matches." But a proposal to change the name of the club to the All England Lawn Tennis Club brought up the croquet members in arms; they defeated the motion by two votes. The committee thereupon resigned—a *coup d'état* that had the desired effect, for the proposal was subsequently

carried. A little later,<sup>1</sup> at a meeting of club secretaries held at Westminster, a committee was appointed to confer with the All England Club with a view to the latter joining a Lawn Tennis Association. Strangely enough the next noteworthy item in the minutes was the decision to cover the open stand with an iron roof. Could it be possible that this resolve was a sequel to the first event!

Another event of importance in 1884 was the presentation by Oxford University of the doubles championship cup, first instituted at Oxford five years earlier, when the contest ran to the inordinate length of seven sets.<sup>2</sup> The ladies' championship for which the demand had steadily been growing in volume, was also inaugurated this year, the title being won by Miss Maud Watson, a lady who at that time had not tasted defeat. Both innovations, and especially the doubles, added much to the popularity of Wimbledon—a popularity to which the magnetic presence of the Renshaws doubtless contributed. “There was something in their style of play,” says Mr. Scrivener, “easy, graceful, yet strenuous enough when occasion demanded; something in their handsome bronzed faces and well-knit figures, something in their neat ‘turn out,’ something in short in their whole personality which appealed irresistibly to the onlookers and caused them to run helter-skelter across the courts in pursuit of their favourites.”

Of the relative merits of the Renshaws this much

<sup>1</sup> January 1883.

<sup>2</sup> L. R. Erskine and H. F. Lawford were the first winners of the doubles championship played at Oxford.

may be said, that Ernest would undoubtedly have won the championship as often as William if his brother had not stood in the way, and that when absolutely at his best probably not even William would have beaten him. "Ernest had a perfect command of every stroke; he had absolutely no weak spot and was extraordinarily active," G. W. Hillyard affirms; "and though William was more brilliant I believe Ernest was an even better player." E. G. Meers, another contemporary, agrees with this view. "In his two best years Ernest was stronger and more finished than ever his brother was. I know which I would sooner have played.<sup>1</sup> Against William in public and private I won twelve matches and lost two; against Ernest I lost six matches and won only two." An eye-witness of Ernest's apotheosis in 1888 declares his game to have been the most scientific display of lawn tennis ever seen. As a handicap player Ernest certainly excelled his brilliant brother. He once gave the lady champion<sup>2</sup> thirty and defeated her after a 'vantage game in the third set.

One figure that created something of a sensation in the Wimbledon arena about twenty years ago deserves more than passing mention. It was that of a young girl, in the middle of her teens, who after the manner of Miss May Sutton in recent years (though their styles of play were quite dissimilar) proved invincible to all comers. This was Miss "Lottie" Dod, who in all won the ladies' title on

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Meers admits, what was doubtless true, that W. Renshaw may not have been at his best in later years.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Dod.

five occasions, a record that only Mrs. Hillyard has surpassed. Miss Dod was, indeed, a prodigy. When only twelve she was known as the "little wonder" and at fourteen she could have defeated many men. She possessed in an eminent degree the faculty of anticipating her opponent's reply. Her forehand stroke had the power and direction of a man's; her backhand, though less virile, was decidedly good; she had not a weak point in her armour. She always volleyed with great judgment and had a capital smash—a weapon (in those days especially) deadly in its effect and in a ladies' double an ace-winner every time. Entering the tournament arena as a child, Miss Dod left it, still pre-eminent, at an age when many ladies have not begun their public career. Her second love was golf, at which game she has reached the same heights of perfection.

In reviewing the championship meetings of thirty years three factors would appear to have contributed to their popular success, or the lack of them have evoked depression:—(1) The magnetic personality of the principal performers (2) the prospect of a close match between two protagonists and (3) a strong international flavour. Sometimes, notably in 1905, you had all these agencies at work together; sometimes you had two; sometimes only one, and occasionally there came a lean year, when the prospect of the champion being dethroned was remote, when there was no "star turn" to attract the crowd. Almost immediately the Renshaws forsook the scenes of their former glory, the stands began to show ominous gaps and the public interest in the annual carnival visibly slackened. It was not because the

standard of play had declined or because the events did not yield exciting matches that were hotly fought out to the bitter end. The meetings between Pim and Wilfred Baddeley in the early nineties provided in the opinion of many sound judges the finest exposition of lawn tennis ever seen in the classic centre court—matches in which the effortless brilliancy and marvellous versatility of the Irishmen were pitted against the superb generalship, supreme accuracy and cat-like activity of the Englishman. These Anglo-Irish engagements were followed with keen appreciation by lawn tennis votaries, upon whom they have left a deep impression. But the championships of that era did not excite the same measure of public enthusiasm as the Renshaw series. Indeed, so marked had been the decline in the profits at Wimbledon that a special committee of the club was appointed in 1895 to consider what steps should be taken "with a view to rendering future meetings more popular with players and the public." One result was the introduction of the All England Plate—a "consolation race" for early victims in the premier event. The profits, however, continued to dwindle until at the 1898 meeting, the second year of R. F. Doherty's reign, they fell as low as £70. Next year, however, came a revival. Mr. Archdale Palmer, than whom no more enterprising or energetic official has ever controlled affairs at Wimbledon, assumed the secretaryship, and with the Dohertys nearing the zenith of their power the public again rallied to the support of the club.

Before touching briefly on the outstanding features of the last decade let me interpolate a few impressions

of the early nineties kindly furnished for this volume by Mr. E. G. Meers, a deep student as well as a skilled professor of the game. Mr. Meers considers that in those days the play was more inspiring and tactical ability more evidenced. "Allowing for the tendency which old people have of extolling the doings of their younger days, I am quite satisfied in my own mind," writes Mr. Meers, "that, with the exception of volleying and service, the play was far more accurate and better thought out than now. The volleying of the present day appears to me to be a little more severe than formerly, but at the same time more risky. The service known as the American twist service is, in the hands of such players as Mr. Brookes and a few others, more deadly and difficult to deal with than the service of most of the best players of the eighties and nineties. But it appears to be forgotten that there were occasionally players who got quite as much twist on their services as the *average* of the twist services of the present day; although they certainly did not vary their services to anything like the same extent. Mr. Humphrey Berkeley in the eighties, and the late Mr. Herbert Chipp, also Dr. Stone and one or two more, got a most disconcerting twist on their services. There was a man named Brown at Harrow, against whom E. L. Williams and myself played in the late eighties, whose service was as bad to take as Brookes'. On soft turf it was almost unreturnable, for it jumped aside a lot, and there was much spin on it. In fact Williams told me that on one occasion he found himself invited to play a set with Mr. Brown at a garden party and, mainly on

account of the latter's service, got beaten — and Williams' ability as a player at that time is a matter of history.

"In respect to conditions at Wimbledon there are certainly improvements to-day. The ground is kept more level and better mown. The players' names and the times they are due to play are posted up, and some attention is given to 'background.' The attitude of the spectators is more sensible. Formerly net-cord strokes and other accidents came in for no end of applause; and the wrong strokes were applauded much more than they are now. The spectators were also in the old days a little liable to assist the umpire by tendering their unasked opinions. In a match in which I was once engaged the umpire could not see a ball which fell near the far side-line, and noticing that the linesman had decamped he was doubtful what to do. 'Out' shouted a dozen spectators. 'In' shouted as many more. 'Mr. Umpire,' I said, 'umpiring by crowd is not a success. I think we will make it a let.' Umpiring and general management certainly show distinct advance.

"Formerly the competitors gave more attention to their condition than now, and this circumstance in my opinion accounts a good deal for the 'in-and-out' form shown at the present day. The prospect of the winner of the All-Comers securing the title was not greater then than it is to-day. The same things had their effect. When the winner of the All-Comers comes to the championship fairly fresh and is not exhausted and 'behind his condition' from several protracted matches, I consider that he has an

enormous advantage over the holder; but since the winner of the All-Comers is nearly always overplayed and stale, the advantage is the other way. Some champions take care to get regular and serious practice before the challenge round, and some do not.

"The outstanding figures in my day were Pim, W. Baddeley, Ernest Renshaw, Barlow, Mahony, Eaves and E. W. Lewis. What impressed me most about these men was the enormous amount of work they put into the practice of the game, both in public and private. Perhaps this remark does not apply to Pim who seemed to possess more actual genius or natural ability for lawn tennis than anyone I have ever met. W. Baddeley was the most consistent player of them all. E. Renshaw had a very remarkable command of the ball; he was inclined to hit at times a little too softly, but there were two years — 1888 and 1892 — in which he developed more severity than at other times, and his record for those years has hardly been equalled. Barlow's immense physical strength, wonderful condition and quickness impressed me rather than the quality of his strokes. Mahony was a persistent volleyer, but weak in the forehand off the ground. W. V. Eaves had hardly a weak spot in his armour, and as for E. W. Lewis, so much has been said of his wonderful style and power over the ball in all positions that I, in common with everyone else who knew him, cannot understand why he was never champion at Wimbledon.

"I recall a few episodes of this period. No first- or second-class man with a reputation would deign

(in the eighties and even later) to play a weaker man in practice without giving him points. This was sometimes carried a little too far. I remember the late Colonel Osborn remarking in his dry way, 'Mr. A. gives Mr. B. half-fifteen, not because he thinks he can give it but because he *knows* that he cannot.' One well-known player in the early nineties actually refused to play another man (who became champion a few weeks later) in a public exhibition match unless he gave him fifteen. This well-known player was badly beaten by the other on level terms at Wimbledon.

"There was a leading player who, when things were against him, would sometimes throw his racket on the ground and somewhat quietly—though with suppressed rage—argue with it at length as to its reasons for thus treating him. The game was at a standstill till he finished apostrophising his racket, but his opponent usually had a good deal of amusement from the variety of epithets hurled at the unoffending weapon.

"One recollection of the inimitable Pim. He played, as you know, with a very low trajectory and frequently got net-cord strokes. After one match a weak but enthusiastic player, who had been very interested and who was a great admirer of Pim, remarked on these strokes to a well-known Irish player who with Barlow was standing near. 'Oh,' said they, 'don't you know Pim can do these strokes whenever he likes?' And on Pim coming up just then, they appealed to him for corroboration. 'Of course I can,' said Pim, with a smile. Taking up a ball—they were standing in an unoccupied court—he

bounced it on the ground and made a drive at the net, making by accident a splendid net-cord stroke. Pim prudently did not try again; but that weak and enthusiastic player will believe for the rest of his natural life that Pim could really do what was claimed for him every time!"

The occasions on which the issue of the championship has been changed by the fate of a single stroke are so rare as to warrant special mention. There was that memorable match, the final of the All-Comers in 1895, when W. V. Eaves had W. Baddeley a beaten man, requiring but a single ace to win a three-set victory and the blue riband of the lawn.<sup>1</sup> "The opening presented itself," says an eye-witness, "and his bid for the high honour took the form of a lob to his opponent's base-line. But the lob, unhappily for Eaves, dropped six inches too far and Baddeley must have felt as one delivered from imminent death." The golden opportunity passed and did not, alas, return. G. W. Hillyard is another player who might have been champion but for the cruel intervention of Fate. After a brilliant victory over H. L. Doherty, the favourite for the title then held by his brother, Hillyard opposed A. W. Gore under a fierce sun, and at one time was leading by two sets to one, five games to four and 40 love! At this critical juncture Gore drove a ball which hit the top of the net, hesitated one breathless second as to which side it should fall, then jumped down over Hillyard's outstretched racket. Had the ball fallen on the other side or had it come over in the ordinary way, another name would probably have been added

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pim did not defend his title this year.

to the championship roll ; for it was tolerably certain at the time that the winner of this match would survive the challenge round, as was actually the case.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the name of H. S. Barlow should also be included in the list of players who may be said to have required but one stroke to win the title. In 1889 Barlow had achieved an unexpected triumph over W. J. Hamilton—who carried off the palm the following year—and in the final met W. Renshaw,<sup>2</sup> back in the ring again after a temporary retirement. The famous twin was many times within imminent danger of defeat and once, when within a stroke of losing the match in the fourth set, he slipped and dropped his racket which fell a yard or two away. Barlow had the “plum in his mouth,” but he made a slow toss towards his opponent’s base-line. Renshaw recovered his footing, and his racket, won the stroke and ultimately the match. Such an incident as this will live for ever in the annals of lawn tennis.

I refer elsewhere<sup>3</sup> to the doings of the Dohertys, the third lawn tennis fraternity whose prowess has focused the eyes of men at Wimbledon. Since the day, eleven summers ago, when the elder deposed H. S. Mahony and inaugurated a family reign which was to last a decade, this name has been on the tongue of every lawn tennis votary. It will live so long as the game is played. The Renshaws held the singles title between

<sup>1</sup> R. F. Doherty, the holder, was admittedly in poor health.

<sup>2</sup> W. Renshaw beat his brother in the challenge round with comparative ease.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapters XVI. and XVII.

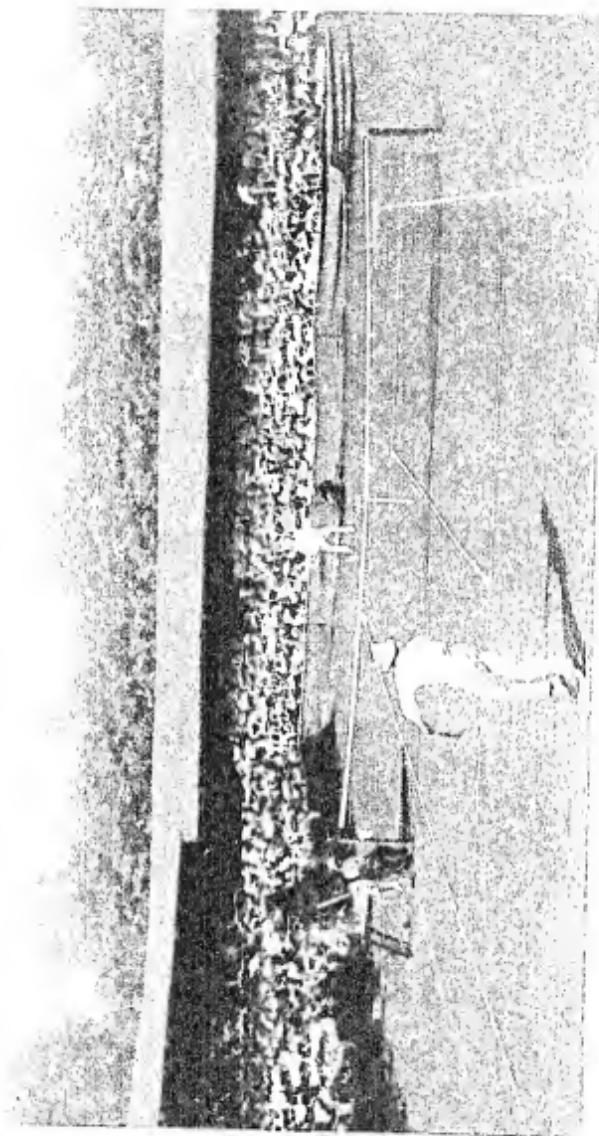
them for eight years, the Dohertys for nine; and it is curious that the difference in duration of their supremacy in doubles is also only a matter of one year. The famous twins, however, were never once beaten at Wimbledon,<sup>1</sup> whereas their successors were twice dethroned;<sup>2</sup> yet he would be a bold man who would deny the right of the Dohertys to be called the finest combination that ever trod the green sward of the centre court. Well do I remember as if it were yesterday the first occasion on which the sequence of the brothers' triumphs was broken—and by a pair employing an unorthodox plan of campaign. I can see Frank Ruseley dancing like a cat on hot bricks within a foot or two of the net, waiting to pounce upon and kill any ball he could possibly reach; S. H. Smith at the back of the court, firing his hurricane drives across or down the side lines and lobbing to perfection when occasion demanded; the champions for once held at bay, anxiety traceable on their faces but outwardly as calm and collected as if they were romping to victory, by no means demoralised but temporarily overcome by the fierceness and audacity of their opponents' attack. The brothers took substantial and conclusive revenge the next year and twice after that thrust their victory home; but history was to repeat itself sooner than many anticipated. From a financial point of view if from no other 1906 was the most successful year Wimbledon ever experienced. There was a balance

<sup>1</sup> In 1889, in the challenge round, the Renshaws only beat G. W. Hillyard and E. W. Lewis (who had defeated the twins in Dublin just previously) by the odd set in five.

<sup>2</sup> By S. H. Smith and F. L. Ruseley in 1902 and 1906.

of over £2000. Nearly 30,000 people must have passed through the gates during the meeting. The magnificent victory of Smith and Riseley over the brothers came as a fitting climax to a great festival. Neither R. F. Doherty nor Smith was in his best form, but the display of Riseley was a revelation. Smashing so consistently powerful, a service so severe and volleying so audacious or effective have, I think, never been seen in combination at Wimbledon before. The Cliftonian played like one inspired.

I cannot close this chapter without referring to two figures whose presence has done so much to maintain enthusiasm and fill the stands at Wimbledon—the respective holders of the men's and ladies' championships. The advent of Norman Brookes in 1905 was at once a revelation of colonial prowess and the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the game. The manner in which the stern-faced, indomitable Victorian, defying English methods, swept triumphant through the British lines that year, being only prevented from capturing the citadel by the skill and fortitude of H. L. Doherty, evoked a sensation and set the seal of fame on the Australian invader. No match on this side of the Atlantic ever drew such a crowd and excited such intense interest as the meeting of Brookes and Doherty, and if most of us felt at the finish that the better man had won, we do not forget that the rallies were fierce and long and that the result might have been more in doubt if the holder, like the challenger, had been called upon to face the ordeal and suffer the physical trials of the eliminating contest. Two



WIMBLEDON 1895: N. E. BROOKES v. H. L. DOHERTY IN THE CHALLENGE ROUND OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP.



years later Brookes came again and this time, though the field was narrowed and the powers of English defence weakened by the absence of H. L. Doherty and S. H. Smith, to say nothing of F. L. Rouse, the stronghold was carried and for the first time in its history the championship passed from the keeping of the British Isles. Nor was this all. The doubles championship fell to the rackets of the dauntless Australian and his New Zealand partner. England for once saw her three national titles<sup>1</sup> borne off on the broad shoulders of a colonial, her players not gaining so much as a single set in defence of these treasures.

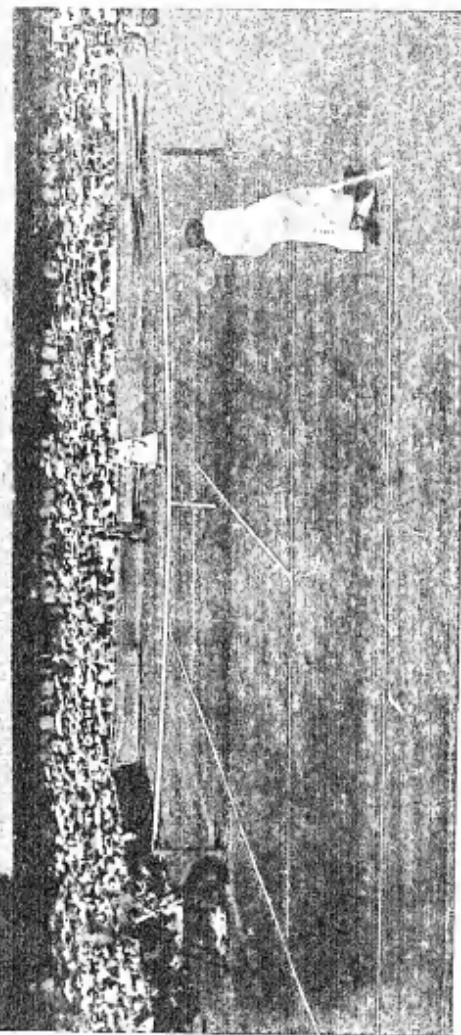
That the ladies' title should also have gone abroad is another blow to home prestige, though I for one can look with equanimity on these "foreign" victories, regarding them as welcome signs of the progress of lawn tennis in other lands and testifying to the universality of a great game. No man or woman who has ever swung a racket could remain impassive to the success attending Miss May Sutton's mission to this country. For an ingenuous girl still in her teens, to journey unattended three times from California to Wimbledon and on two occasions to carry all before her (including the hearts of many onlookers), defeating in succession ladies trained by long experience in all the arts of a difficult pastime, is a feat which compels our admiration. Its achievement also mitigates any national mortification we may feel. No ladies' battles on the courts have made such a wide appeal or created so deep an

<sup>1</sup> With Mrs. Hillyard, Brookes won the All England Mixed Doubles Championship at Manchester.

impression as the three challenge rounds between Miss Sutton and Mrs. Lambert Chambers. Spectators came almost as early and waited as patiently for the drama to begin as if the All England ground had been the Lyceum and the occasion an Irving *premiere*. And as one recalls that sea of animated faces, the breathless silence with which each momentous rally was followed and the rapturous applause between the rests, one can also remember the prophecy of the All England committee-man, who twenty years earlier had declared, "The ladies will come in time!"

What has destiny in store for future patrons of Wimbledon? It is certain that testimony to the cosmopolitanism of lawn tennis, recently demonstrated by the successful invasion of pilgrims from Melbourne and Pasadena, will be furnished at each succeeding championship. In short, the days when the players of this country can regard the blue riband of the lawn as their rightful heritage are over. Conditions of play may be improved, but they are scarcely likely to be materially changed. It is also difficult to see how the highest standard of play can be advanced, though the general standard, especially where ladies are concerned, will doubtless continue its upward tendency. There are many ever-present factors, such as temperature, light and wind, whose variations will and must militate against further accuracy and the actualisation of an absolute ideal. If the steadiness of Baddeley and H. L. Doherty, the brilliancy of Pim and Lewis, the placing of Chipp and Chaytor, the service of Brookes and Ward, Ernest Renshaw's lobbing and absolute

THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL INVASION: MISS SUTTON & MISS POTGAT ASS. WOMEN'S INC., 1942





command of the ball could be combined in one player, Wimbledon and the world at large would acknowledge a master against whom every champion of the last thirty years would have fought in vain.

## CHAPTER III

### LAWN TENNIS IN OTHER LANDS

The universal game—America's national pastime—President Roosevelt as a player—The "Tennis Cabinet" at Washington—Schools as recruiting agencies—Popularity in the Colonies—Conditions and progress in Australia—New Zealand's seven thousand club members—Nursing budding talent—Continental expansion—Eight hundred players in Hamburg—Some famous German tournaments—Austria a land of rich promise—A. F. Wilding relates some experiences—Spain and Portugal—The keenness of the late King Carlos—Sweden's proud boast—A recollection of Stockholm and of King Gustav—Switzerland's appeal

LAWN TENNIS has long ceased to be only an Englishman's game. Indeed, regarded as a national pastime, its hold on the popular mind is stronger in America and in some of the Continental countries than in the land of its birth or in the Colonies of Great Britain. In athletic England lawn tennis entered a competitive field already occupied and the fact that it has claimed the allegiance of so many supporters and assumed the place and power it has is adequate testimony to its inherent virtues. On the Continent the soil may be said to have been already prepared for the seed—a rich and fertile soil as events have proved; and the growth of the game has supplied opportunely the demand for athletic culture. Its influence on the recreative side of national life in Europe has been deep and

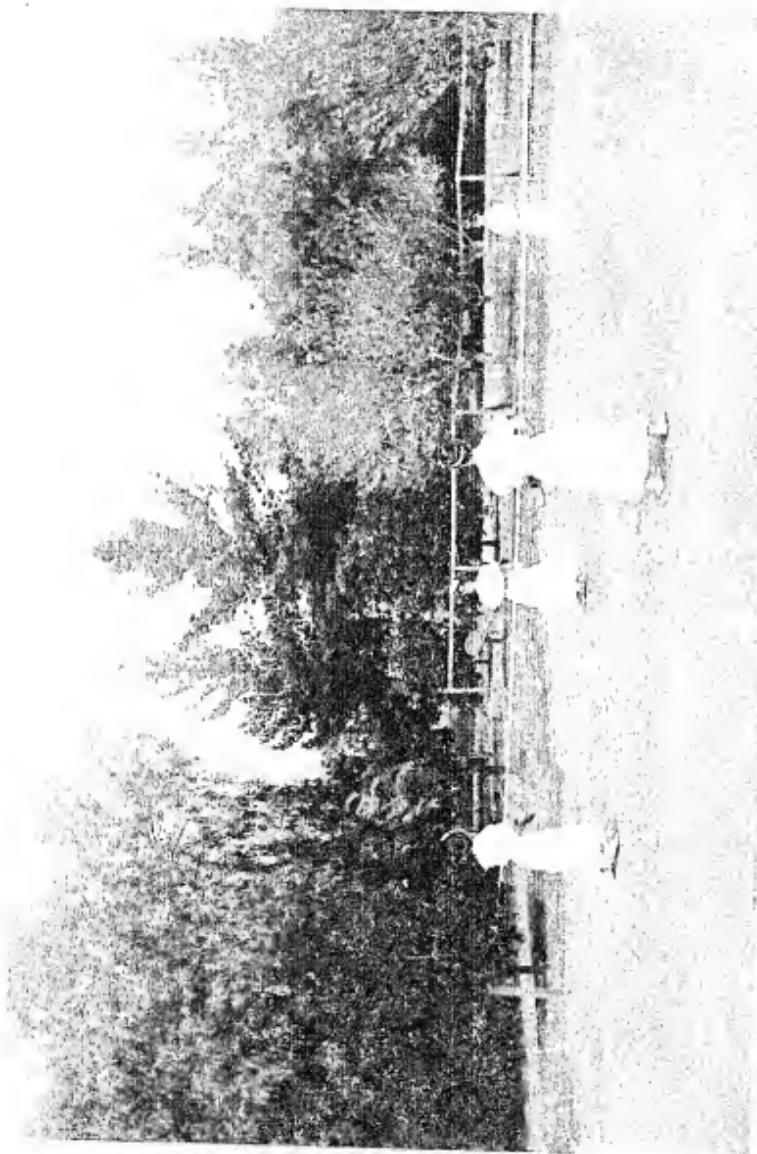
catholic. Young men who formerly amused themselves in the *café* and found their only outlet for physical energy in conscription now flock to the courts. Older men, finding a medium at hand for healthy and novel exercise, which relieved the monotony of the chase, welcomed the pastime with scarcely less enthusiasm; and when Royalty gave it blessing and active patronage and Society realised that it had found a new and pleasant diversion, the triumph of lawn tennis was assured. Nor can the limits of its future expansion be defined. Every month proclaims new clubs and the inception of new tournaments and at each international meeting the lists become more cosmopolitan. Indeed, surprising as the fact may appear to some people, lawn tennis can claim more adherents the world over than any game in existence. Equally is it true that its clubs out-number those of any other pastime.

Some conception of the fervour with which lawn tennis is pursued in the United States may be gathered elsewhere in this volume.<sup>1</sup> Barely more than thirty years ago the pastime in America was unknown; to-day it is virtually the summer national pastime. It has a firm and permanent hold at all the leading colleges, is played in the public parks and in private gardens and is an indispensable feature of every country club. At Washington, the seat of Government, it enjoys unusual prestige, not only the public officials but the President and several members of the Cabinet being numbered among its ardent adherents. Mr. Roosevelt personally supervised the construction of a hard-packed clay court in a

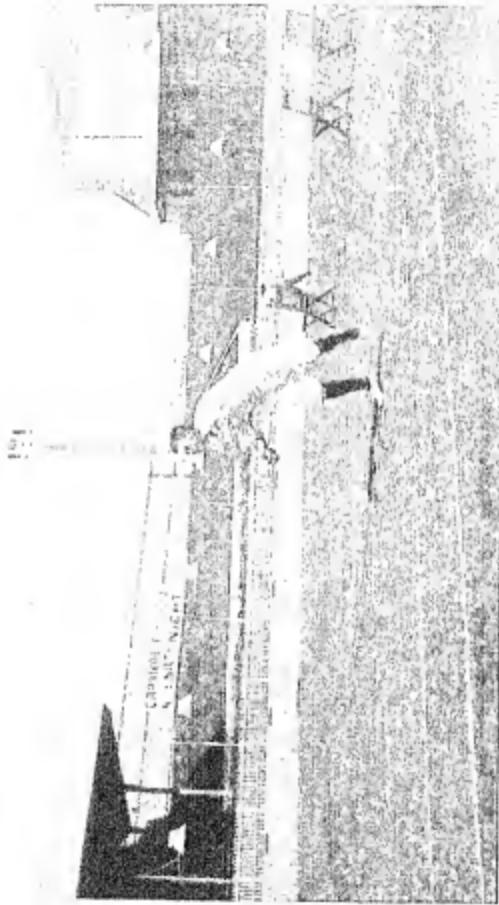
<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XVI.

corner of the White House grounds, not forgetting to add a dark green fence which should serve the double purpose of a playing background and a screen. Here the President, clad in rough-and-ready flannels, neither new nor fashionable, may be found at play nearly every afternoon in good weather, and with him as partners or against him as opponents have appeared from time to time many noted politicians and diplomats. Indeed, the coterie of White House tennis enthusiasts which Mr. Roosevelt has gathered round him is popularly known in Washington as the "Tennis Cabinet" and is said to exercise almost as potent an influence over administrative affairs in the capital as the real Cabinet! The Bishop of London, as newspapers on both sides did not fail to inform the outside world, was a recent guest on the President's court.

But though the President of the United States may, as a man past middle life, engage in lawn tennis for its tonic qualities, the career of the expert in America is comparatively short. For one thing he is shipped into business soon after leaving college and only rarely pursues the game seriously after the office call has been answered. On the other hand he begins to wield a racket at a much earlier age than his British cousin; players have won the blue riband in the States while still at college. The Interscholastic Association, founded seventeen years ago, promotes tournaments every year which are held under the auspices of seven of the leading universities, the winners at each meeting at Newport during the week of the National championship to decide the School championship. These competitions not only stimulate friendly rivalry between the schools,



THE LADY CHAMPION'S HOME COURT AT PASADENA, CALIFORNIA: MISS SUTTON AND HER SISTERS IN A DOUBLE



HORACE RICE, CHAMPION OF NEW SOUTH WALES, SERVING ON THE SYDNEY GROUND

but are invaluable recruiting agencies for the senior tournaments. The inter-scholastic champion may, and often does, prove to be the national champion of the immediate future. The universities also run a competition of their own which encourages both corporate and individual zeal. As recent international matches have demonstrated, the standard of play in America is quite as high as the standard in this country, and for spectacular, if not sustained, brilliancy the best exponents across the Atlantic are as a body probably superior to any players in the world. American ladies, however, have not yet reached the same standard as the ladies in England, though their devotion to the game is indisputable and one of their number has so far upset previous calculations as to win the blue riband at Wimbledon on two occasions. American girls do not get the same opportunity to develop their skill as English girls. A first-class mixed double is comparatively rare as are ladies' events generally at the principal tournaments, and the long distance between the various tennis centres precludes many team matches. The next few years may tell a different story.

There is no need to emphasize the popularity of lawn tennis in Britain beyond the Seas. It has gained the adhesion of thousands of colonials of both sexes. There is not a city of any size in Australia which does not boast its clubs and even in the distant back-blocks a court of hardened earth is improvised by the exiled workers. Each State possesses an association which controls the game within its boundaries and these, with New Zealand, form the Lawn Tennis Association of Australasia,

a governing body that directs international and inter-state matches, as well as the Australasian championships, and also organises teams for service abroad. As the game can be played in the open all the year round it is possible for the itinerant champion to be continuously in court from March to December, his fighting line passing through Adelaide, Tasmania, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and Melbourne. Inter-state matches, especially those between Victoria and New South Wales which have historic traditions, are a feature of Australian tennis, and a place in a State team is a justly coveted honour.<sup>1</sup> Grass courts of excellent quality are used for these matches, as for the State championships. At Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide the courts are prepared on the local cricket Oval, while the associations at Brisbane and Perth use their own grounds. But in Melbourne, except on these occasions, asphalt courts are universally employed and are available all the year round—an advantage which makes the covered court unnecessary. Australians prove themselves apt pupils and remarkably zealous in the pursuit of new strokes. The exposition of the American service by Mr. Norman Brookes stirred the pulses of every player in Victoria and yielded at once a host of disciples all bent on acquiring the new weapon of attack. But Australia, like England, lacks the school nursery to stimulate budding talent. The colonial universities are more modern in their ideas and Inter-Varsity matches now form a conspicuous feature of the athletic year. Professionalism, here as elsewhere, is foreign to the game.

<sup>1</sup> N. E. Brookes first played for Victoria in 1896.

Some idea of the growth of lawn tennis in New Zealand may be gathered from the fact that the New Zealand Association has now affiliated to it 9 district associations, 2 sub-associations, 123 clubs and 7110 playing members. At the championship meeting held at Christchurch in 1906 there were no fewer than 429 entries for all events. As in Australia most of the clubs have hard courts which are utilised throughout the year. The Thorndon Club in Wellington, however, has very good grass courts, and better still are the grass courts at Napier in Hawkes Bay, the venue of the championships in 1903. About thirty open tournaments were held in New Zealand last season. All the associations hold their own championships at which handicap events are included. Public school championships, be it noted to the credit of this Dominion, are held at Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin, and in addition several of the leading clubs include boys' events in their tournament programmes. The young player of promise is not neglected in New Zealand. Clubs, of course, have their own meetings—at one no less than twenty-five trophies are competed for annually. The keen spirit animating the players is instanced by the fact that the courts are often occupied as early as five in the morning and only cleared at nightfall. Right through the winter one club that I could mention has an average daily attendance of fifty players and only five courts for service. A committee-man "runs a book" and regulates the flux of members into court so that everyone has an equal innings. The players are classified according to merit and the men are required

to take their share of mixed doubles. It is an excellent idea.

In South Africa the hard court has universal rule and the atmospheric conditions favour fast play. The standard has risen considerably in recent years and exhibits every promise of further rise. Port Elizabeth may be regarded as the civic pioneer of the game in Cape Colony; under the auspices of its club and on its courts the championships of South Africa were contested up to 1899, when lawn tennis had spread throughout the Colony with remarkable animation. Until the early nineties volleying was practically unknown and the appearance of Mr. L. A. Richardson, a stranger from the Orange Free State, armed with the new weapon of attack, created a sensation at Port Elizabeth where he easily won the title. As a result the standard of play in all the chief cities underwent a marked improvement; as in England a decade earlier the "pat-ball" era came to a welcome end. Prior to the Boer War, which temporarily checked the expansion of lawn tennis, the clubs in the Western Province had formed an association and had organised inter-club matches with marked success. When peace was declared other colonies and provinces followed this example, notably the Transvaal which had its headquarters in Johannesburg; and subsequently the South African Union as the supreme governing body was established with representatives on its council from eight affiliated associations. Under the zealous presidency of Mr. H. J. Lamb, the Union has stimulated the game in such measure that on the Rand alone there are now 300 courts. Each association has its annual open

tournament and the Union arranges the South African championships, held rotatively in the larger cities.

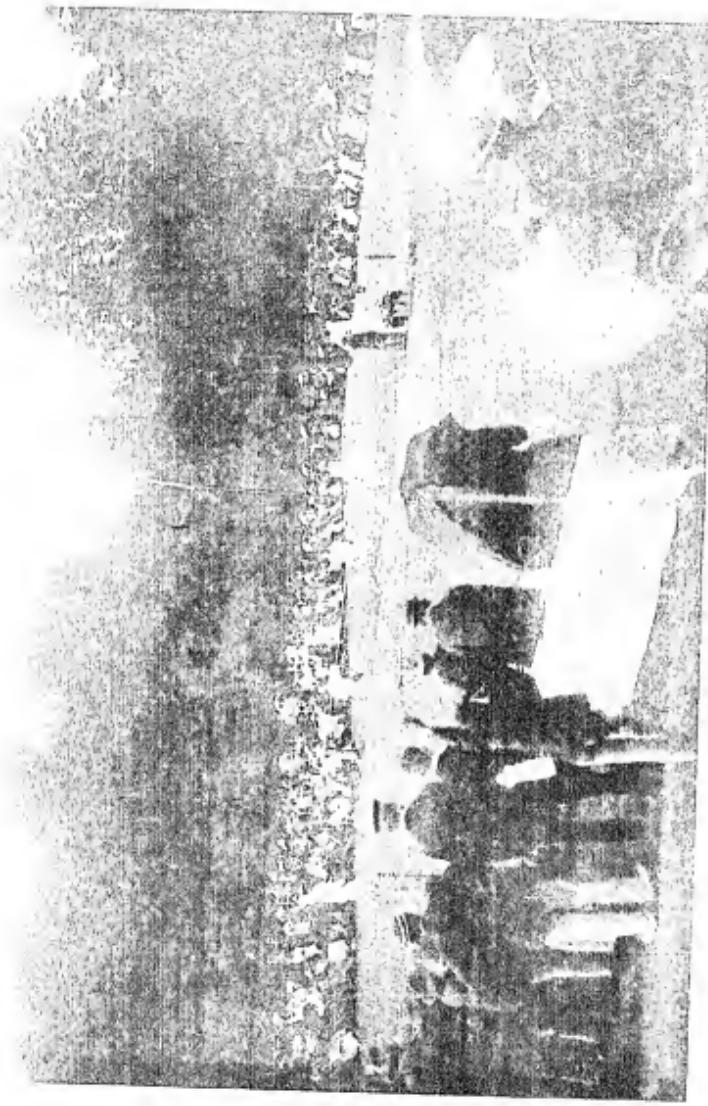
Canada, however, has considerable leeway to make up. Though the proximity of the Dominion to the United States would lead one to expect the same catholic interest, development has been handicapped by the national claims of lacrosse and the lack of good courts. But the formation of a new club at Montreal with twelve grass courts owned by the members is a sign of further awakening, and other indications are not absent to show that Canada is increasing her lawn tennis votaries every year. The same may be said of India, where the native is numbered among the elect.

Nearer home the spread of the game has been phenomenal. I can speak to some extent from personal experience because I have visited most of the principal tennis centres in Germany, France, Holland, Sweden and Spain. Clubs, equipped with the most up-to-date appointments, efficiently managed, with excellent courts and a large membership, are to be found in all directions. No sooner does the membership of one club exceed reasonable limits and the accommodation of the courts prove inadequate than a new one is started in the neighbourhood. In Germany this growth has been perhaps most marked. Roughly speaking, it is estimated there are now 1400 courts in the Fatherland, of which nearly half belong to clubs affiliated to the German Lawn Tennis Association. It is surely remarkable that in Hamburg alone there should now be something like 800 players of both sexes. For the propagation of the pastime in this city chief credit must be given

to Mr. C. A. Von der Meden, the father of German lawn tennis and the founder of the first club—Eisbahn und Lawn-Tennis Verein auf der Uhlenhorst—in 1888. No more zealous and enterprising captain has ever been at the helm of a ship. The two largest clubs in Hamburg command sixty hard courts between them and there are many other smaller clubs. The government of the game in the district is vested in the Hamburg Lawn Tennis Guild, which holds a tournament every spring and autumn, the latter being the international gathering. It was at this meeting last August that Germany won national independence in the world of lawn tennis; her leading player, Otto Froitzheim, won the national title and broke the chain of foreign successes that had extended for ten years. This achievement, rendered more memorable by another triumph at Homburg a fortnight later,<sup>1</sup> has not only brought Froitzheim at one bound into the front rank but has inspired hope in the Fatherland that Germany may soon put a team into the field that can compete on level terms with that of any other nation. Certainly the country has a supply of young players that any land might envy; lacking at present, perhaps, generalship and experience, but equipped with good style, variety of stroke and abundant zeal.

Almost as many open tournaments are now held in Germany as in England. Of these Hamburg, Homburg, Wiesbaden, Baden-Baden and Berlin are the chief and yield the highest-class play. The

<sup>1</sup> Froitzheim beat A. F. Wilding by three sets to love in the final of the Homburg Cup.



HOMBURG'S INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT, 1907: GERMANY WINNING THE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP OF EUROPE.



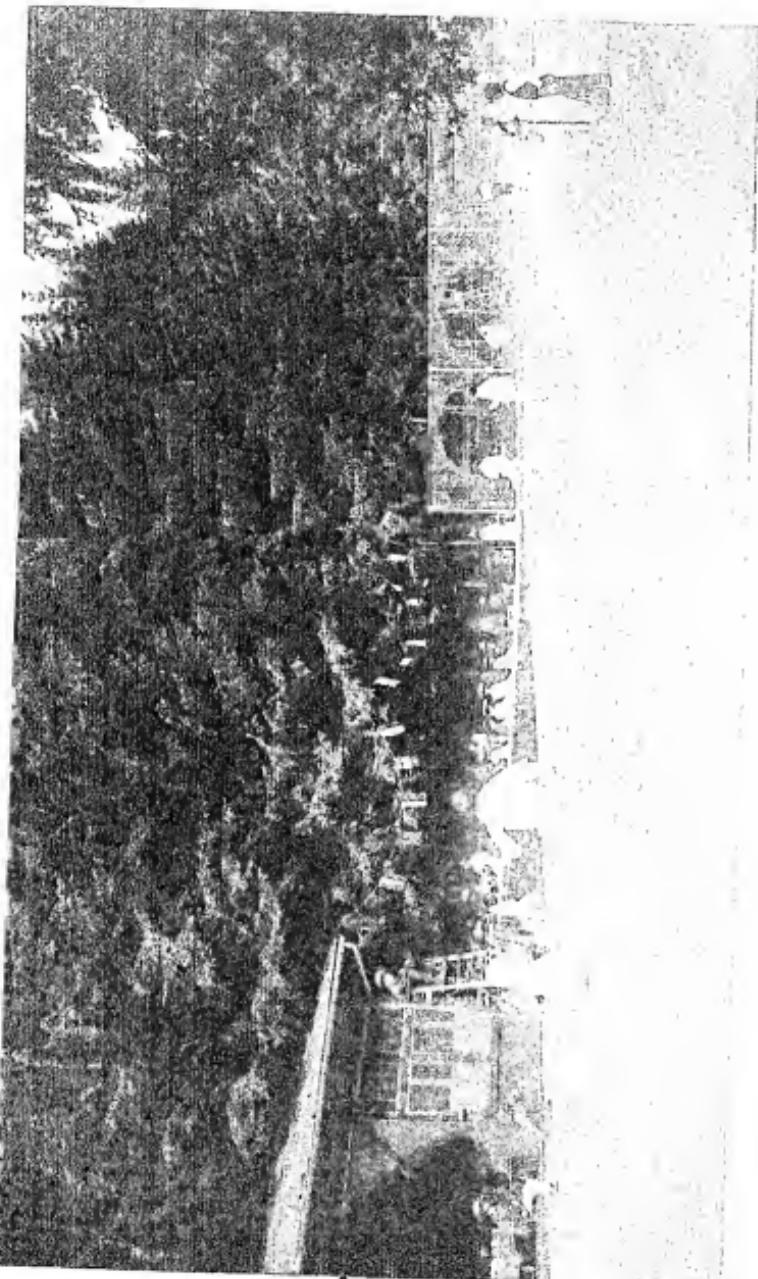
meeting at Homburg has attractive features unexcelled at any I have visited; and quite apart from the tennis, which is most capably organised and attracts a fashionable assembly, I commend to the tennis tourist a sojourn at this delectable resort. He will find the early-morning promenade to the springs (which he will observe rather than taste) valuable training; the incomparable music in the Kurhaus gardens at night will soothe his nerves wrought by strenuous match-play; and the dinner-parties at the sumptuous hotels will do him no harm if he is abstemious. The bijou golf course close at hand in the Park may appeal to him while the courts are drying, as they sometimes must after a particularly heavy rain—a shower or two never causes delay. I advise him not to be lured into testing the virtues of the Gordon-Bennet motor race-course just before an important match. My friend, Mr. O'Hara Murray, once drove me at a breathless speed over part of this famous route. I think we must have covered the journey from Saalburg to Homburg at something like seventy miles per hour. It was a fine test for the racing capacities of the motor, but a bad preliminary for an exacting five-set double. Baden-Baden is five hours' railway journey from Homburg, and though the climate in August is somewhat enervating the courts are ideally situated—indeed the whole place is set among arboreal charms, picturesque hills and sparkling streams. Wiesbaden has its tournament in May and its "gallery" is remarkable alike for its size and its enthusiasm—as many as two thousand spectators have surrounded the courts at one time. The Turnier Club in Berlin, crowded with members



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has recently demonstrated its progress by moving to a more capacious ground.

Austria is a land of rich promise so far as lawn tennis is concerned. The Austrians are ready pupils and many begin to play almost in pinafores. Some idea of the standard may be gathered from the fact that the six best Austrians would easily defeat an average Oxford or Cambridge team. Vienna and Prague are the two principal centres. In the capital of Bohemia, the valley-city of spires and bridges, two open tournaments are held annually, that promoted by the Prvnicesky Club, held on a charming island in the Moldau, having a strong international flavour. The entries last year were so numerous—one hundred and fifty in the handicap singles—that three classes were necessary. Vienna is splendidly equipped with clubs. The two most important—known as the Athletic and Bicycling Clubs, though lawn tennis is the chief concern of each—are situated in the Prater, the Hyde Park of Vienna, and the big annual tournament where hospitality will be showered upon the visitor is held alternately at each. Vienna is not yet ahead of Prague in the quality of its players, though it claims the two brightest stars in the country, one of whom, C. Von Wesseley, is in the front rank of Continental exponents and given more prudence and experience is destined to rise to eminence. Marienbad, Austria's most fashionable watering-place, the scene of King Edward's annual cure, holds a delightful tournament in August. The courts are situated in a magnificent forest of firs near to the Waldguella and owe their inception to the generous enterprise of Count Broël-Plater who, first constructing one court for his



THE COURTS AND CLUBHOUSE AT MARIENBAD



PRINCE AND PRINCESS BATTHVÁNY STRATTMANN

private use, was led by the interest his venture excited and the increasing flow of players, to make two others and eventually to add five more and erect a luxurious club-house. Over five hundred matches were contested at the Marienbad tournament last year. The succeeding meetings at Franzensbad and Carlsbad are also well patronised.

Lawn tennis flourishes in the smaller Austrian towns in a remarkable degree. Mr. A. F. Wilding relates that when making a motor-cycle tour through Bohemia he encountered signs of its existence in many places. "While lunching at a hotel in Pilsen a local doctor recognised me and armed with the head waiter as interpreter pressed me to stay and play him a match on his club courts which he assured me were very good. At a small country town named Pisek, when stopping in the road to fill my petrol tank, a tall lanky youth, who had an old racket under his arm, informed the assembled crowd that I was 'Herr Vilding the Australien!' When passing along the shores of the Balaton, a big lake in the heart of Hungary, I was amazed by the number of courts I saw. Almost every villa with any pretensions to size possessed one."

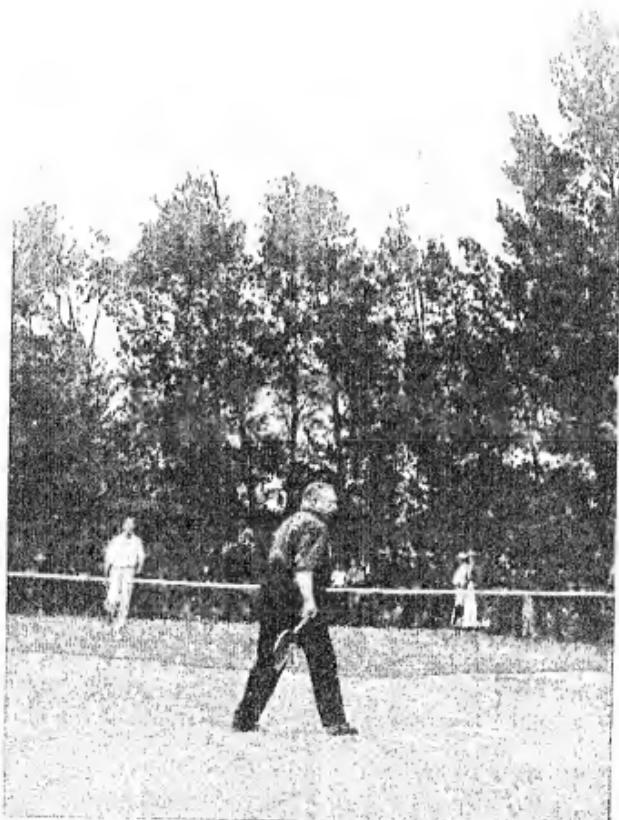
Prince Batthyány Strattmann, by birth a Hungarian and by education an Englishman, has done much to foster the game abroad and is a conspicuous figure with the Princess at many of the principal tournaments. Years ago he was a champion of real tennis and won several prizes in Vienna and Paris. He is now well known as a yachtsman and among other successes captured the Queen's Prize with King Edward on board his yacht. The Prince

has one of the best hard courts in the world at his castle at Kör mend and has built another for the use of the townspeople in the adjoining park. Another pioneer and generous patron of the game in Austria is Prince Raoul de Rohan, president of the Marienbad Club, who has a first-class court at his castle. Among others who call for mention in this connexion are Count Nostitz, members of whose family are very keen players; Baron Ringhöffer, upon whose broad shoulders the management of the Prague tournament falls and Mr. Ebermann of Prague, who has the welfare of Austrian lawn tennis close at heart.

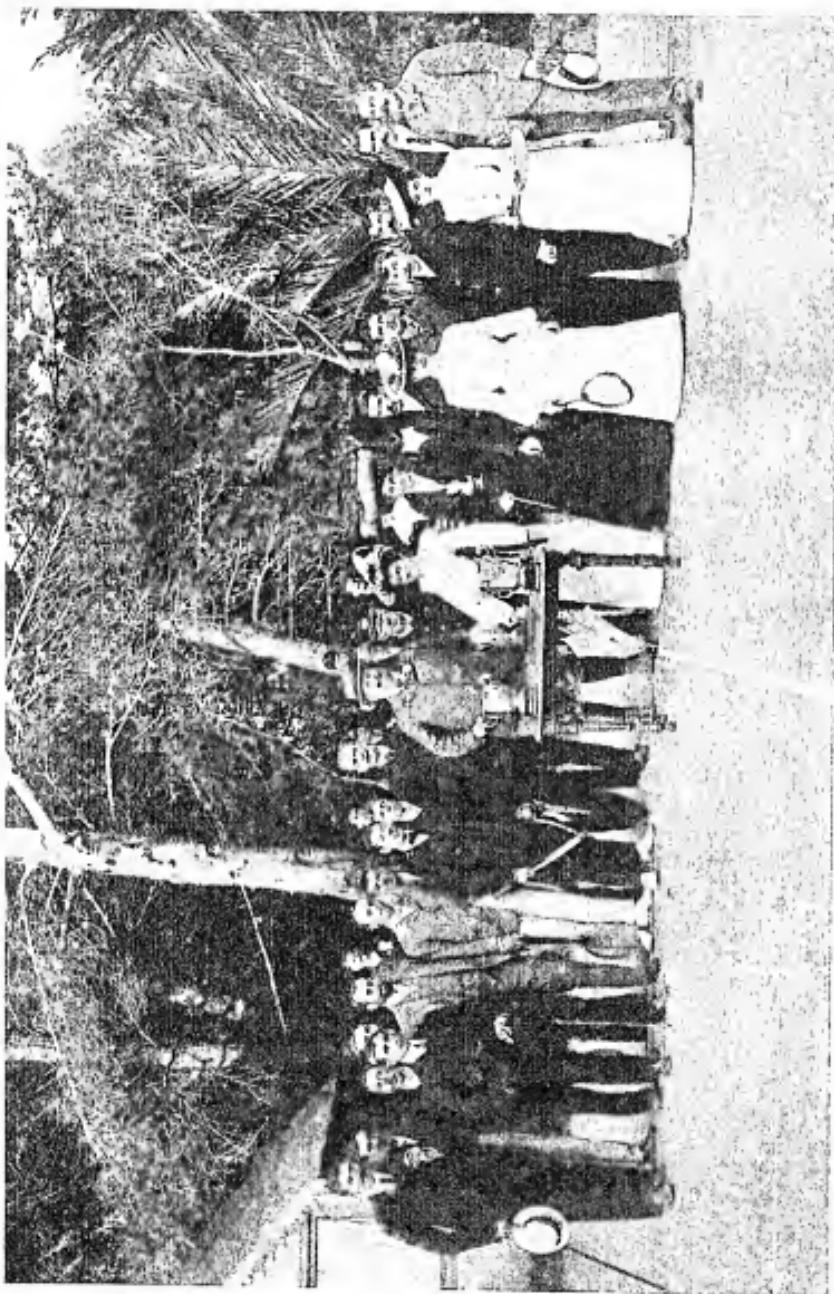
I refer elsewhere to the popularity of lawn tennis in the south of France<sup>1</sup> and at many other French resorts, notably at Boulogne, Le Touquet, Dieppe, Etretat and Dinard, besides Paris, which boasts the well-known Auteuil Club and the fashionable courts on the Ile de Puteaux, successful open tournaments are held. In Spain, where King Alfonso is now a zealous votary, there has been a steady propagation, and in Barcelona the pastime divides the spectacular interest of the residents with pelotta and the sanguinary excitements of the bull-ring. In Madrid and San Sebastian there are also several courts.

Portugal has lost its leading patron by the tragic death of the versatile Dom Carlos. His predecessor on the throne, King Luiz, was also a player and there is one zealous votary in Lisbon, Signor William Pinto Basto, who has had the distinction of successively engaging three generations of the Portuguese royal family in a friendly match. For many years the late King had pursued the game at the Sporting Club,

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XVIII.



THE LATE KING CARLOS OF PORTUGAL IN A MIXED DOUBLE  
AT CASCAES, 1901



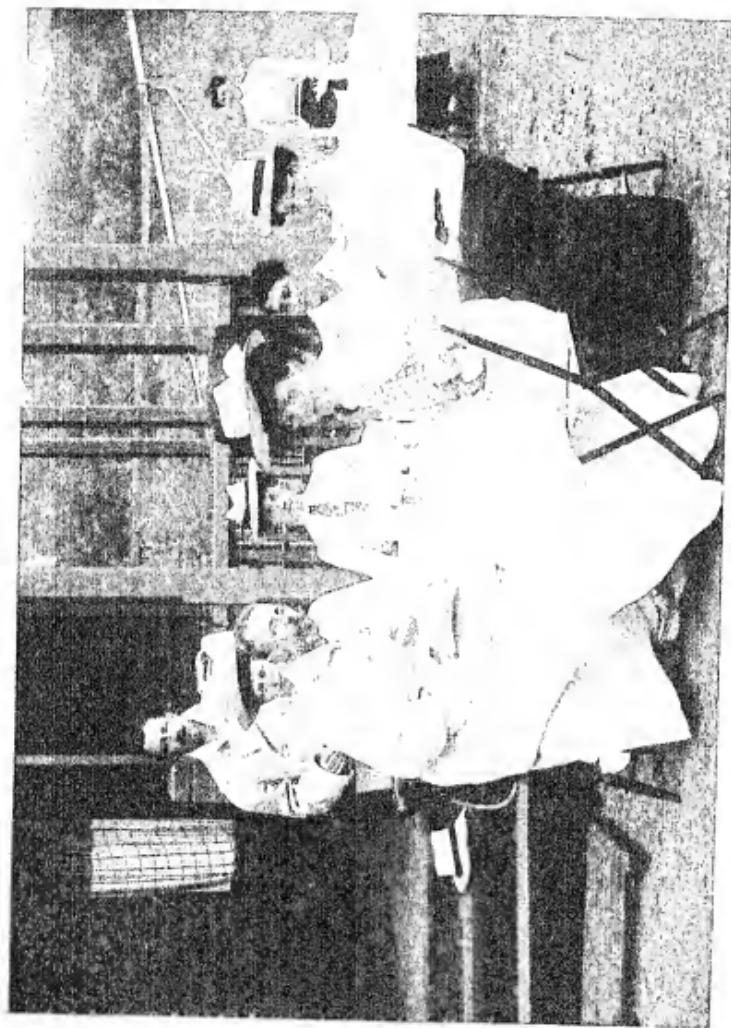
THE LATE KING CARLOS DISTRIBUTING PRIZES AT CASCAES, 1903

Cascaes, and at the Royal Tapeda Club, besides on the various palace courts. His Majesty had competed at many tournaments and appeared in the annual North *v.* South contest, as well as in the championships. His most effective strokes were made at the net, one being a dangerous backhand volley across the court. Of the royal courts the one at the Pena, Cintra, is unquestionably the most noteworthy. It has the best gravel surface in Portugal, is irreproachably situated so far as light is concerned, and the dark green backgrounds are perfectly arranged.

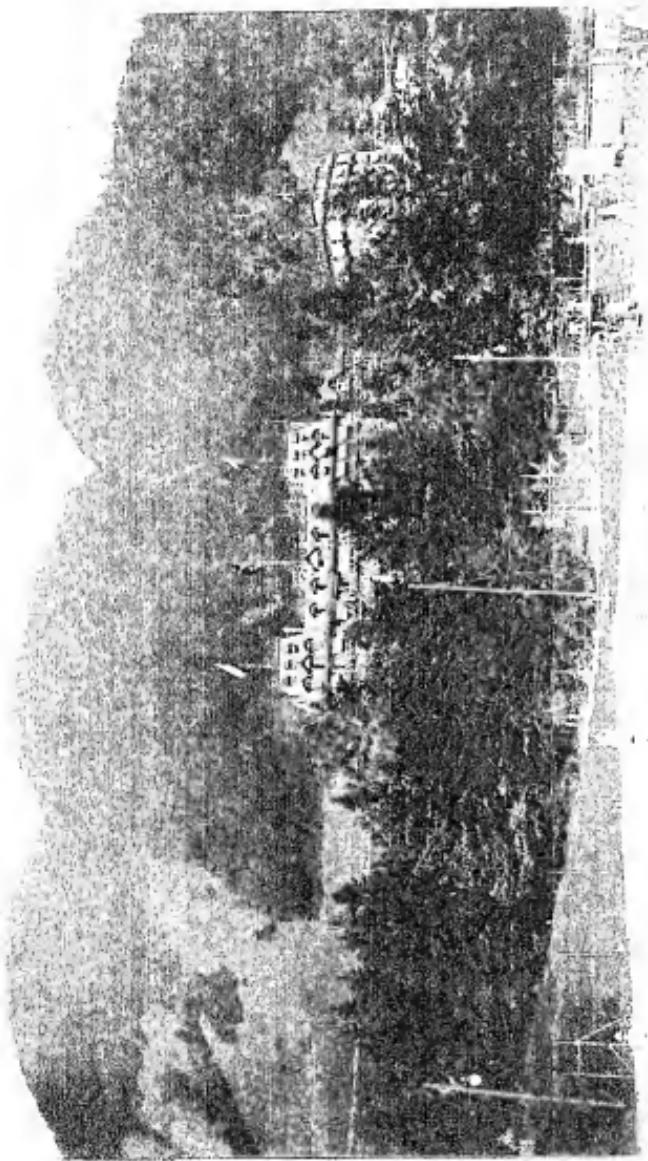
Another monarch who has done much to further the interests of the game abroad is the newly-enthroned King Gustav of Sweden, than whom a more passionate votary probably never lived. His active pursuit of lawn tennis as Crown Prince and his warm support of every club in the kingdom has prompted Swedes of all classes to handle the racket. Play is by no means confined to the short summer months, or to the outdoor arena. Indeed, it is in covered courts of which Sweden boasts more than any other country in the world that the higher qualities of the pastime have developed. Stockholm has now nine indoor courts, the best-known being the two belonging to the Crown Prince's Club in Idrottsparken. Constructed under the auspices of King Gustav, who used them regularly, they are the venue of the Swedish championships in May and have attracted many foreign rackets. Of my visit to Stockholm I have very pleasant and grateful recollections, tempered only by thoughts of the consistently bad weather that prevented the many features of this beautiful capital being adequately

appreciated. Everybody, from the Crown Prince (as he then was) showered hospitality on the foreign visitor, and if this plenitude of good things was sometimes embarrassing and inimical to form on court, it is certain that no players in a strange land have been more regally entertained. Well do I remember the lawn tennis dinner which the Prince, now King Gustav, gave in his own apartments at the palace and the dismay which crept over me when the host of the evening gave in turn to each of his guests the Swedish toast "*Skål!*" Fortunately there were no speeches but only a ceremonial response. Another graceful act on the part of the Prince was the personal gift of a little blue-and-gold badge, inscribed with a crown and a pair of rackets, which makes its owner an honorary member of the Crown Prince's Club. Gothenburg, Säro, Jönköping, and Upsala University are among many other centres of the game in Sweden, and open-air courts are to be found in Copenhagen and elsewhere in Denmark. But the factor of greatest promise in Scandinavian lawn tennis is the facilities offered to schoolboys to pursue the game. Nearly every school gymnasium in the larger Swedish towns now has its indoor court, and stimulated by the sympathy and encouragement of the newly-formed Swedish Association, in which the King takes a close personal interest, the boy-player makes rapid progress to the front.

The Swiss meetings I have not yet had the good fortune to visit, but from all accounts the attractions they offer in respect to climate, picturesque environment and surface conditions, make them an enviable field for the tennis tourist. The Swiss Association



KING GUSTAV OF SWEDEN AND OTHER COMPETITORS AT THE SARO TOURNAMENT, 1907



THE COURTS AT LES AVANTS, SWITZERLAND

now has fifteen open tournaments on its fixture card, the best known being those at St. Moritz, Ragatz, Château d'Oex, Les Avants, Lucerne and Montreux. English, French, Dutch and German players are not slow to recognise the merits of these meetings and each season finds the lists inflated. Indeed, it is the same story wherever one goes abroad—the game never calls in vain.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HOLD OF THE RACKET

The use and abuse of a standard grip—Norman Brookes' distinctive hold—Principles of forehand grip explained—How the Dohertys hold their rackets—Principles of the backhand grip—The vexed question of the raised thumb—What American authorities say—The grips of Miss Sutton and Mrs. Lambert Chambers: How they differ—Influence of the forefinger in special strokes—Max Décugis and the results of his finger manipulation—Danger of a fixed backhand grip—Proper time to tighten the muscles—Large handles and fancy handles

WHEN a game has arrived at maturity, as lawn tennis has, the fact should imply among other things that a standard has been attained which represents the best method of holding the racket, just as it represents the best method of making the strokes. It might reasonably be urged that the result of an evolution passing from the Renshaws to Pim and Wilfred Baddeley and culminating in the Dohertys should provide a standard that might safely be recommended to the aspirant after championship honours. A standard, of course, is not to be regarded as being unalterable; progress would in that case be burked. But a standard is inevitable, and some explanation and description of it is desirable, first, in order to test new methods when they are exhibited, and, secondly, for the benefit of young players who must have something

definite at which to aim. If such a standard is misunderstood, it is possible that criticism of it may miss the point, and while addressing itself to what in all good faith it regards as the principles of the standard, may be really dealing with the defects of those who have attempted to acquire them on wrong methods and without understanding. As an instance of this one may refer to the criticism of the use of excessively large handles and of the unorthodox backhand grip—faults which do not attach to the standard itself, but are due to the lack of adequate explanation of it.

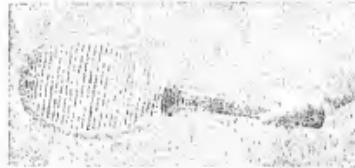
In the accompanying illustrations of the grips of great players certain differences in the hold will be at once detected—differences which naturally evoke doubt in the mind of the learner anxious to acquire the most serviceable as well as the most fashionable grip. For the purpose of education I prefer to take H. L. Doherty's grip as the standard, not because it is certain to prove suitable to every beginner, but because with slight modification it is the grip of the principal English exponents. These exponents may have been vanquished at times by colonial or foreign rivals whose grip is not in accordance with English canons, but it is rather, I think, in spite of these grips and not because of them that victories have been achieved. The case of Norman Brookes, the present champion, is a fair example. The famous Australian admits that he has a distinctive and peculiar hold of the racket—a self-taught grip in fact; and while it may be conceded that this hold is perfectly satisfactory for his distinctive strokes—indeed, that they would be virtually

impossible to execute without such a grip—the rational instructor of lawn tennis would scarcely regard Brookes as a practical model. In the matter of cause and effect the Australian's methods are unique. I think for practical purposes we may regard them as such.

Physically speaking, there is only one grip. Its position may change in the backhand stroke, but the grip itself is the same for forehand and backhand, ground-strokes, volleys and service. A preliminary notion of the forehand grip may be obtained by thinking of the way one grasps a hammer, a sabre or an axe, and of the movement such an implement executes when jerked up and down while the handle is loosely gripped between the forefinger and the thumb. When the thumb and forefinger are half-open and parallel to one another, they form three sides of a long or flat rectangle. This rectangle just fits the handle of the racket, as if the latter were made for it, which as a matter of fact it is. If we regard the handle as a rectangle, then one short side fits the space between the base of the thumb and the base of the forefinger; the long sides rest along the second phalange of the thumb and the third phalanges of the fingers, respectively. It is as if you were holding a sabre with the grip appropriate to a cut, and were then to hit the object with the flat instead of with the edge. In the next place, the hand, with the thumb and all the fingers, except the little finger, must be sloped slightly upwards; the forefinger should be a little farther up the handle than the thumb, in order to act as a strut or prop. Both thumb and fingers rest obliquely across the



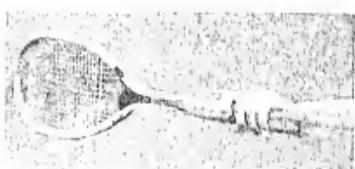
R. F. DOHERTY (ENGLAND):  
FOREHAND GRIP



R. F. DOHERTY (ENGLAND):  
BACKHAND GRIP



N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA):  
FOREHAND GRIP



N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA):  
BACKHAND GRIP



M. DÉUGIS (FRANCE):  
FOREHAND GRIP



M. DÉUGIS (FRANCE):  
BACKHAND GRIP



flat or long sides of the rectangle, while the first phalanges of the fingers grip the long side on which the thumb is placed. A rough method of fitting is to place the hand on the handle in such a position that the line which runs from between the thumb and forefinger to the centre of the wrist (the line of life) lies along the junction of the ash and mahogany. The heel of the hand, but not the little finger, (which will be almost an inch higher), rests on the leather. Lastly, the whole grip may retain this position, which may be called *the first position*, or may be moved, (as it often is in play), about half an inch round towards the back of the handle; this may be called *the second position*. These two varieties are, roughly speaking, the respective grips of R. F. and H. L. Doherty. The second is the more usual grip.

The backhand grip is the same as the forehand, but reversed. That is to say, the thumb is on the back of the handle, in the position corresponding to that of the forefinger in the forehand grip. Its business therefore is to act as a strut or prop, and it is best to place it so that its extreme point is very slightly higher up the handle than the forefinger. The ball of the thumb will be almost entirely on this long side. Meanwhile the first phalanges of the fingers grip the short side of the handle. By the method of fitting by lines, the line of life lies along the junction of the ash and mahogany opposite to that indicated for the forehand grip. It is not essential to have the thumb up the handle, but it is to be recommended, primarily because the backhand stroke is rarely so hard or firm as the forehand, and therefore needs support and guidance. The position

corresponds to the *second position* of the forehand grip. That corresponding to the *first position* is not recommended—though sometimes one uses it in quick volleying—for the reason that the wrist is not sufficiently at the back of the handle.

Wilfred Baddeley, a former champion whose views naturally claim respect, was not a believer in the shifted grip for the backhand stroke. "There is no doubt," he observes,<sup>1</sup> "that the second method comes more naturally to the beginner than the first one, but when the first method of gripping (the permanent hold) has been practised for a time and the player has become accustomed to it, it is every bit as easy and as comfortable as the second method; and it has the advantage that the player who uses this grip will never be forced to miss a stroke, as I have frequently seen done, especially among inferior performers, through not being able to shift the grip quite quickly enough to meet the ball fairly." Baddeley denies the assertion that the failure to change the grip causes a loss of power in the stroke and imparts a twist to the ball. He says that the ball if properly struck will travel in precisely the same manner as if the racket were held in the second method. I am bound to say that Baddeley has the weight of expert opinion against him, and it is a fair comment to point out that his own backhand was never quite so formidable as his forehand. Dr. Dwight, the leading American authority, altered his view upon the subject between the time of his first and second books—an interval of seven years. He first declared that good form demanded a permanent

<sup>1</sup> *Lawn Tennis*, by W. Baddeley.

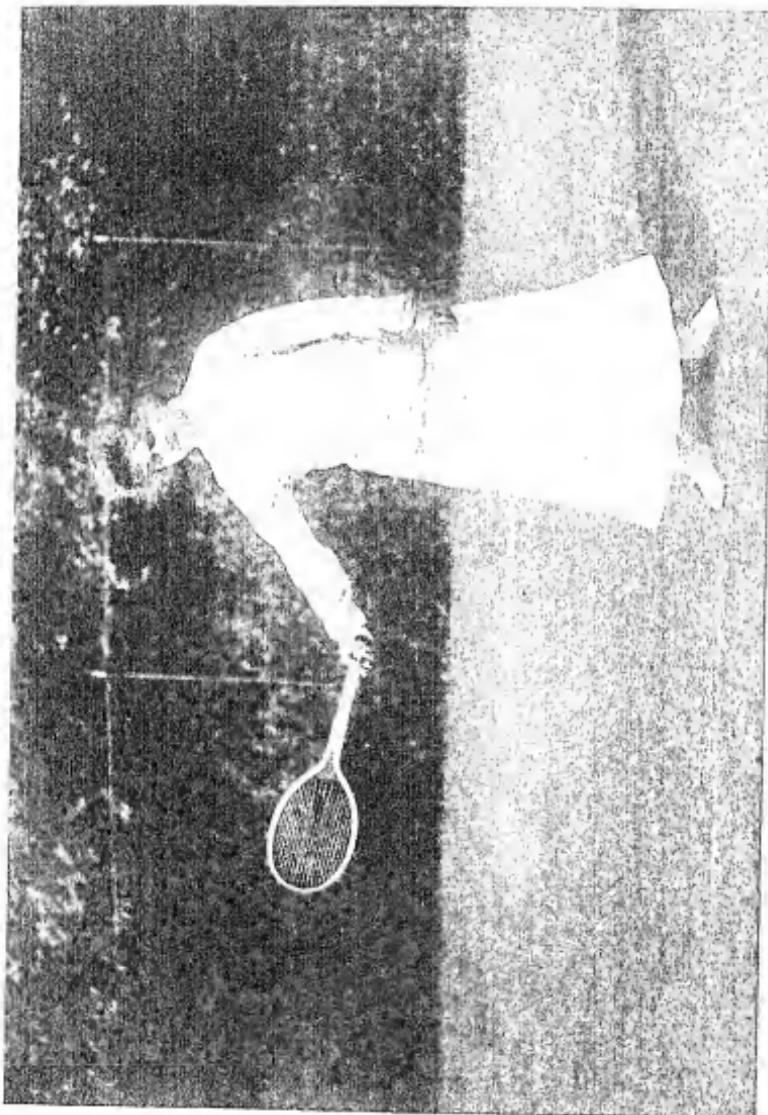
hold on the handle of the racket which was not shifted for the backhand; but subsequently he withdrew these instructions and declared that a fixed grip entailed much more cut on the ball than was advantageous. "After considerable study," says Mr. Parmly Paret,<sup>1</sup> "I have found the best players shift the grip through just one quarter of a circle." This may be true of most American first-class players—especially of those employing spectacular strokes—but I doubt if the "turn" is as much with English exponents. The fact is it would scarcely be politic to lay down a hard and fast rule in regard to fixity or movement of the grip. The standard in England may not be the standard in America and again the standard of both may differ from the standard in the Colonies. Personally I have not much belief in studied emulation of a champion's grip. I have seen so many good scoring shots made with dissimilar holds on so many courts and by so many different players, most of them in the front rank, that dogmatism on this point seems unwarrantable. Regard, for example, Miss Sutton's grip. It differs materially from that of Mrs. Lambert Chambers, her foremost opponent. The American lady holds her racket at the extreme end—in fact the leather knob is almost embedded in the palm of the hand—while the thumb, in this case exercising the function of a clamp, is broadside across the handle and is pressed against the second finger. Mrs. Lambert Chambers, like S. H. Smith, permits a distinct margin of wood to come between the heel of her hand and the leather, while her thumb is raised

<sup>1</sup> *Lawn Tennis* (American Sportsman's Library).

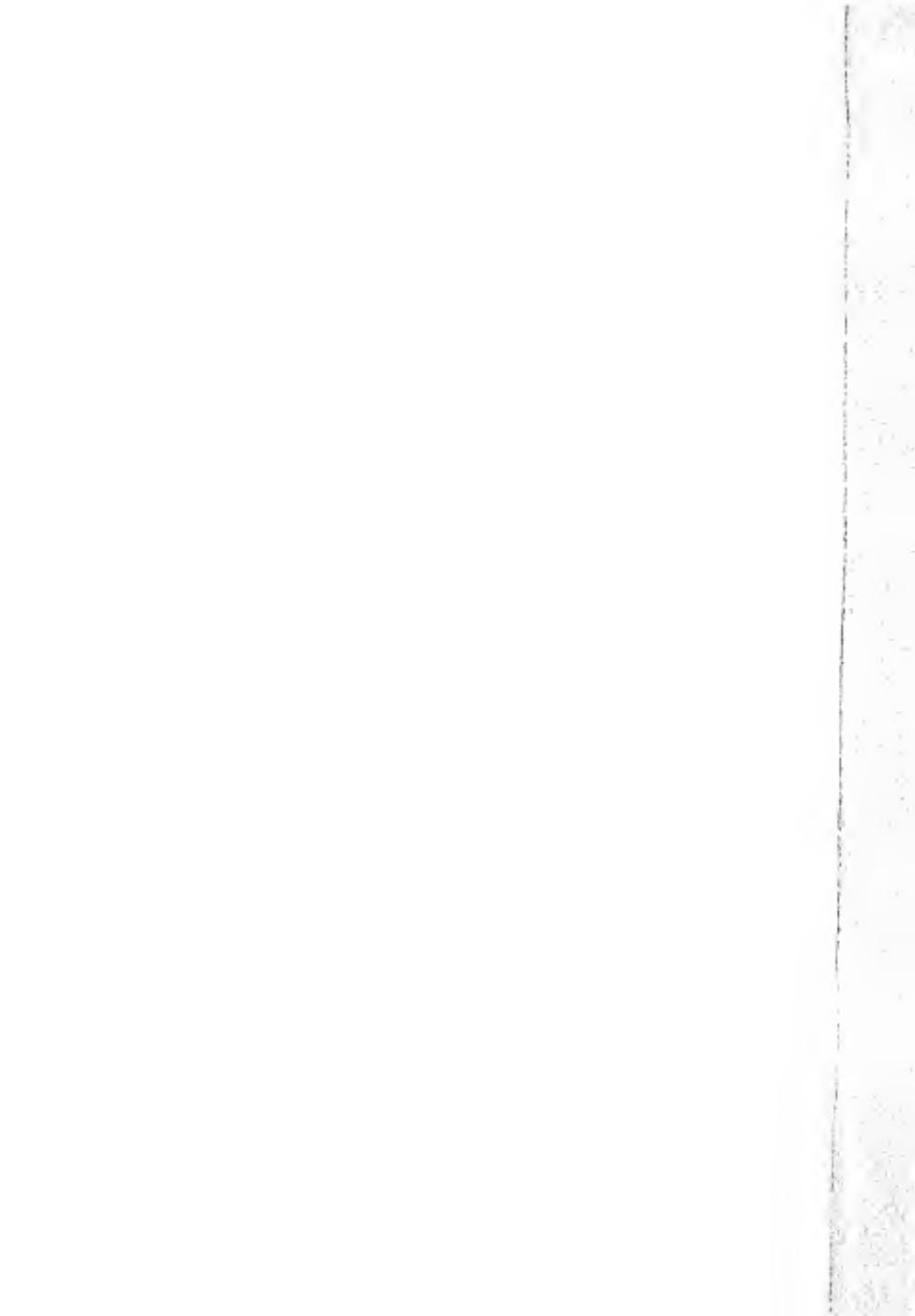
higher than Miss Sutton's and is not firmly "screwed down." Each would assuredly tell you that she finds her own grip best for the execution of her own strokes, which differ materially from the strokes of her rival both in the method of striking and the effect which that method has on the ball.

In fact, though the holds of champions may differ—and a glance at the accompanying illustrations will demonstrate that at once—we may accept each as a model of grip for executing the distinctive strokes which formulate their attack. The close-quarter backhand push-volleys with little or no preliminary swing that have proved such effective weapons in the armoury of Norman Brookes are, it may be avowed, best performed by holding the racket in the manner depicted in the illustration—for one thing, the slightly inclined face of the racket, which helps to "deaden" the ball after it bounces, can be more readily maintained in its position. The modern English exponent as typified by the Dohertys would find this grip both awkward and impracticable. The Dohertys' backhand volley is more delicate and more wristy; the body is farther away from the ball when the stroke is made, and there is more preliminary swing. I am not here discussing scoring potentialities of given strokes—what happens after the particular grip has done its work. I am only seeking to illustrate the point that the grip cannot be universal with lawn tennis the cosmopolitan game it is.

I said just now that each champion had distinctive characteristics in his hold and that these peculiarities were concerned with the individual strokes associated



MISS SUTTON (AMERICAN): FOREHAND GRIP



with his game. Looking at the grip of Max Décugis, the French champion, you will observe that for his forehand drive the forefinger is, according to the English standard, abnormally raised and is well up the handle, so much so as to convince you that its position must exercise a visible influence over the stroke. Now Décugis takes the ball at its highest altitude, either in a line with or just below the shoulder. His racket is descending briskly at the moment of impact, thereby imparting that lift to the ball which is such an effective feature of the Frenchman's attack. Décugis, a natural player if there ever was one, finds that this raised forefinger tends to promote greater control and ensure a more accurate aim. His forehand and service grip is very similar to that of the late H. S. Mahony, and it was, I think, because of this raised finger that the Irishman, hitting the ball not as Décugis does at the top but nearer the middle of its bound, had a comparatively weak forehand drive.

This brings me to another point which would seem to confirm the desirability of a slight—in some cases it is almost an unconscious—change of grip for the backhand. There are players who have so cultivated their backhand, using it even in positions where the forehand would more effectually yield a winning ace, that when necessity requires them to execute a forehand stroke the result is far from satisfactory. On close examination of their hold they will probably find that the backhand grip, in this case a fixed grip, is being used for the forehand stroke; that is to say, the thumb has not been shifted with the consequent slight turn of the racket's head.

The result is frequently an incomplete follow-through and a lack of adequate length. Conversely, the same reflection applies to the predominating forehand stroke and its influence on the grip for the back-hand stroke. But though I believe that this matter is worth the attention of the student I am yet unconvinced that the precise position of either the thumb or the forefinger on the handle of the racket is a factor which makes or mars a player. The more one considers the standard English strokes as performed by the Dohertys, the more is it made clear that the grasping of the racket is performed with the second, third and little fingers and that the thumb and forefinger, like the whole of the right hand in the golfer's grip, are auxiliary directing agencies.

The grip should not be very tight until the moment before the ball is struck. At that moment the muscles brace up unconsciously. If they are consciously tightened all the time the arm and hand quickly tire and when you hit the ball your grip is apt to give. This saving of the muscles is particularly easy in the service. Continuous tightening of the muscles has another result—it prevents a full swing back, as may well be seen in the service, and thus a feeble follow-through completes an ineffective stroke. The Japanese tell us that in Jiu-Jitsu the grip should be quite loose till the instant when the movement is executed.

Lastly, I would counsel beginners never to use a handle too large for the fingers to work easily. The circumference at the extreme end, just above the leather, should be from  $5\frac{3}{4}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, being reduced to 5 inches half a foot higher up. A proper use of

the first joints of the first three fingers is important for giving those finer touches and last directions to the behaviour of the ball, and these are best secured by using a handle that admits a full hold. Avoid, too, the "fancy" handle. Many years ago one came out which had cavities for three separate grips, graded for various strokes. For a few sets it was regarded with the mingled awe and curiosity which a daring innovation inspires. But when its impracticability and finally its impotency were established the owner beat a hasty retreat, returning into court next day with a more orthodox, if less ornamental, weapon.

## CHAPTER V

### DRIVING: FOREHAND AND BACKHAND

Learning the strokes—First essentials—Evolution of the forehand drive—The forehand drive considered in detail—The parts played by the wrist and the elbow—How the racket should be swung back—Hitting the ball—The follow-through—Fundamental principles of the stroke—The essential factor in timing—How to acquire certainty and mechanical accuracy—Application of weight and its effects—The value of the big stride—Why a chop cannot be a drive—Top or over-spin—The so-called lifting-drive and how it may be acquired—Half-court shots—The backhand drive—Some advice to beginners—Final instructions

HAVING mastered, or at any rate comprehended the principles and functions of the grip, the beginner may turn to a study of the strokes. One may insist upon the importance of attending to the strokes and acquiring a certain degree of facility in them as played in the best style before games are attempted. They are the foundation, and some approach to mastery of them, or at least some certainty of execution, must be attained before the player can profitably concentrate his attention on tactics and the winning of matches. Many a player is still, after long apprenticeship, under the impression that in order to improve he must play against better men until he beats them. This is all right if the strokes are each and all perfect in some

degree ; but as a rule they are neglected. Accordingly the player actually fails to improve simply because the desire to win and the attention that must be given to strategy are so engrossing that the bad habits with which he began become too deeply rooted for correction. The beginner should also be told, as he is told in other games, that when he has learnt the standard style of stroke, he may give his individuality full play, and, if inclined to do so, may modify the standard—but the standard must be learnt first.

The explanations of the strokes which have been given in books are usually far too condensed and illustrate merely the surface-appearance of a stroke. The beginner is told, for instance, to take the ball at the top of the bound. It seems a simple thing to do, until he tries it. But unless he is told more or lights on the right track himself, he will generally fail to acquire a method by which the result becomes habitual and safe. The same drawback belongs perhaps to the study of photographs of the strokes, and in a less degree to the watching of first-class players while actually executing them. This latter study is absolutely necessary, but is of little practical value unless one knows or can think out just what the player is doing and how he does it. And this is precisely what one cannot know or even see with the eye, until one has grasped the rationale of the movements. It is the same in every game, and may be illustrated from conjuring. When watching a conjuror you do not actually see what he does, only the surface of the result, only what he wants you to see. Many surface results in lawn tennis are similarly misleading ; for example, when a player puts over-spin

or top on a ball, he appears to hit it on the top. As a matter of fact he hits it on the bottom.

In the evolution of the forehand drive, the master-stroke of the game, three stages may be distinguished, which the learner is recommended himself to follow in his education. In the earliest, the main portion of the work, exclusive of some inevitable movement of arm and shoulder, was done by the wrist. This joint was used as a pivot, on which the hand and the racket moved. In the second stage, the main portion of the work was done by the wrist and the forearm. In the final stage, the work is done by the whole lever, wrist, arm and shoulder each performing its share. To these must be added the fingers. It must not be supposed, however, that the shoulder, the last factor to appear, does the main portion; it puts weight and steadiness into the stroke and relieves the muscles of the elbow and wrist. Again, it is obvious that for certain shots (which may be called half and three-quarter shots), the first two stages—the wrist-stroke and the arm-stroke—are inevitable and invaluable. In delicate strokes the fingers, guiding the wrist, are the controlling factor.

We now take in detail the various parts of the standard stroke for the forehand and the backhand drives, and suggest a practical method of getting the whole thing mechanically perfect.

Both in the forehand and the backhand drive the hand should be bent back, so that the wrist is more or less rigid (see Plate I.). It may prevent misunderstanding, if I state at once that this rigidity is intended not to make the stroke wooden, but to secure two most important results. It is intended not only to



PLATE 44. W. A. LARNED (AMERICAN): FINISH  
OF FOREHAND DRIVE

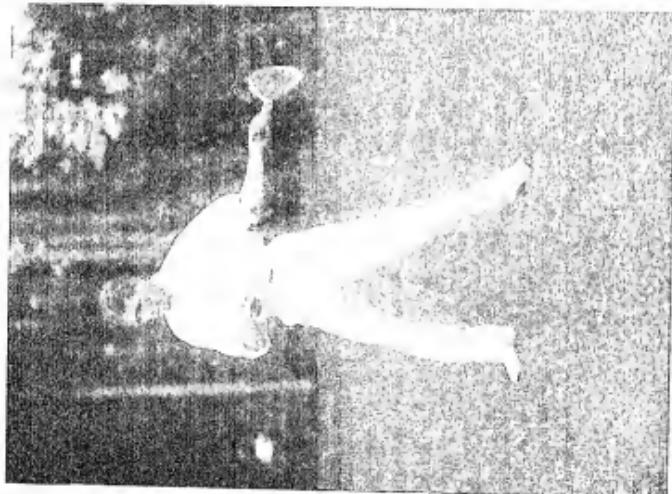


PLATE 45. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIAN): BEGIN-  
NING OF FOREHAND DRIVE



ensure firmness and consequently to lessen fatigue, but also to promote elasticity, just as it is necessary to compress a spring in order that it may recoil. With regard to the elbow, in one form of the forehand stroke it is bent, and moves close to and almost touching the player's side. In the other form, as developed by S. H. Smith and A. W. Gore, the arm is more or less at full stretch. For the backhand the shorter stroke, with the elbow at the side, is much the better ; it is also to be preferred for the forehand, being safer than, though not so strong as the longer stroke. In the follow-through the arm must be fully extended. In the next place, the elbow should be kept down ; there is in fact, no tendency to raise it, except in the lifting-drive.

It will be well to study this point a little more closely. Keeping the elbow down assists the final upward movement of the racket in the follow-through (as may be seen from Plate II.), which shows that the ball has been lifted correctly. But a more important reason is to be found in the fact that the rigidity of wrist and elbow—that is to say, the lowered position of the latter—makes the curve of the arm and racket almost convex to the ball. The advantage of this is that the lever which performs the work, does not give in any of its joints, and, secondly, that the wrist and forearm, thus guaranteed against moving back, move at or after impact forward with the pent-up force as it were of a released spring, and, thirdly, that the muscles of the wrist and elbow are relieved by a sort of forced inaction, until they are needed, and that thus the shoulder more easily comes into play.

In the backhand drive, however, the elbow should

not be kept down, nor should any conscious attempt be made to manipulate its position. This is necessitated by the anatomical structure of the arm, which on the backhand is indeed convex to the ball but has its central joint turned in the opposite direction to that in which it points in the forehand. In the follow-through the arm will be extended enough. It will be seen that the principle of the position of the elbow is really the same in both forehand and backhand drives.

The sideways position for the forehand drive, with the left foot advanced and the right a little to the right of a line parallel to the stroke and passing through the left foot, is universally understood. It may be pointed out, however, that, the stroke being a side-stroke, it is not necessary or advisable to have the left foot pointed straight in the direction of the stroke. It should be nearly so but not quite. This may be seen in almost all the photographs here reproduced.

The absolute tyro, instead of trying to master the whole stroke at once, may begin with wrist and arm-work, leaving the shoulder and other factors till later. He should notice to begin with, that the standard drive is a horizontal stroke, the ball being taken at or about the height of the waist and the racket being more or less parallel to the ground. It is a good plan to go on a court alone, stand a fair distance from the net and throw balls up, hitting them when the bound is at a convenient height. After some practice of this sort, you may get some one to hit balls to you.

A preliminary notion of the movement of the complete stroke may be obtained by comparing the drive at golf. The lawn tennis stroke is, of course,





PLATE III. MRS. LAMBERT CHAMBERS (ENGLAND): BEGINNING OF FOREHAND DRIVE

not so near the vertical, the ball being from three to four feet up in the air. The forward swing of the racket describes the lower half of an ellipse; it comes down, striking the ball at about the lowest point of the swing, and rises in the follow-through, much in the same way (though the curve is straighter) as a golf-club. Before this forward movement begins, the racket has to be swung back, and here a practice which has an analogy in golf is useful for the learner. It may be described as "measuring" the stroke, or "addressing" the ball, just before the racket is swung back behind the shoulder. You wait for the ball to bounce, resting the shoulder of the racket in the left hand, with its head pointing not so much across the body as towards the net. Then, just before the ball reaches the ground, release the racket from the left hand, and point it obliquely forward to the ball. This gives you the range as it were. It is useful to have a fixed time at which to commence the swing-back. Such a time, varying of course with the pace both of the stroke received and of the ground, is the moment when the ball bounces. The swing-back must on no account be hurried. The racket should rise slightly, above the line in which the stroke will be made (see Plate III.).

The ball itself has now to be dealt with. It is when the racket meets it, that the real difficulties begin. The swing-forward should be firm and slow rather than fast. It is a mistake to suppose that a very rapid stroke produces a rapid drive; this is effected by body-weight and by timing. A steady and slow swing-forward prevents that "snapping" at the ball which is one of the worst faults a beginner

can form. The ball should be hit as clean as possible, without chop, undercut, top-spin or side. From first to last, that is till the moment of striking, the eye must be concentrated on the ball. It is helpful to bend the head down towards the ball. In the next place the ball has to be controlled, in order to get it over the net, inside the court, and to the place where you wish it to go. Many factors combine to give this command; the steadiness of wrist and elbow, the timing of the stroke, the position of the striker; but it is the fingers and the wrist that chiefly, or at least finally, control the ball. Practice alone leads to this result; when you can feel the ball, as a rider feels his horse's mouth, you may know that the secret is in your grasp.

The stroke must not be checked for the fraction of a second. Properly speaking, the follow-through does not influence the ball at all, it is a result, not a cause. It is probable that even with the most thorough follow-through the gut does not touch the ball for more than a fraction of a second. A golf-club it has been calculated, touches the ball in the drive for  $\frac{1}{7000}$ th of a second.<sup>1</sup> What a firm and complete follow-through does imply is that the ball has been correctly and adequately controlled. With this is connected the fact that the stroke, though primarily a hit, has also the characteristics of a sweep and a push, and it is this virtue which enables you to steer the ball, to obtain certainty, and even to alter its course at the last moment. At the end of the follow-through the head of the racket will be more or less across the body, more so for a cross-court and

<sup>1</sup> Professor Tait.



PLATE V. H. L. DOHERTY (ENGLAND): FINISH  
OF FOREHAND DRIVE



PLATE VI. S. H. SMITH (ENGLAND): FINISH  
OF FOREHAND DRIVE

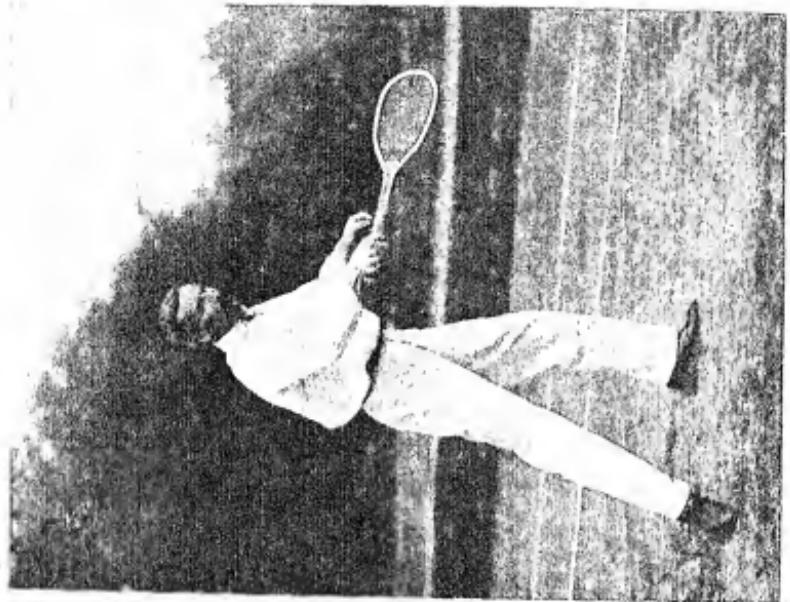


PLATE VII. G. W. HULLARD (ENGLAND): FINISH OF FOREHAND DRIVE

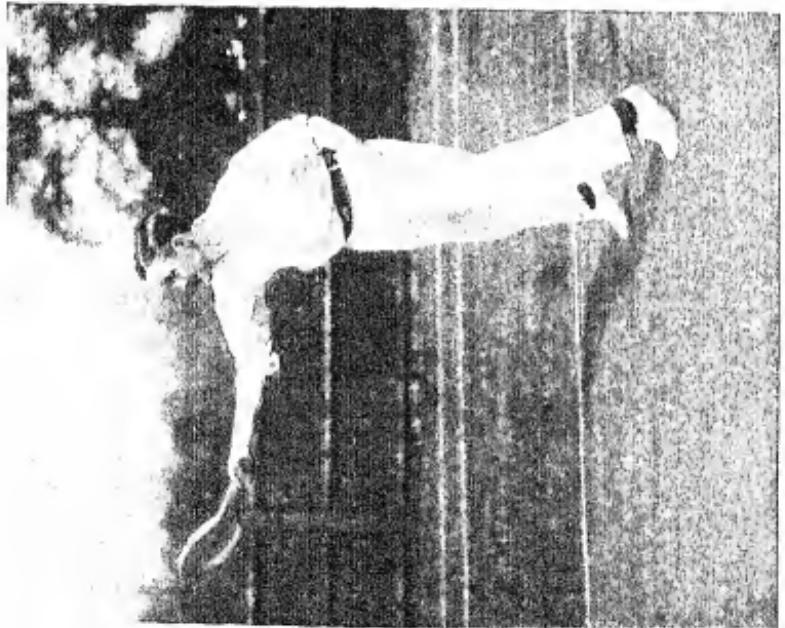


PLATE VII. A. W. GORE (ENGLAND): MIDDLE OF FOREHAND DRIVE

less so for a side-line shot, and as before stated it will rise (see Plates IV. and V.). The path of the racket may be roughly represented by a curve,



A being the commencement of the swing-forward and B the end of the follow-through. When a ball is higher than the waist, this curve will be bent, B will be lower and A higher, that is to say, the player must hit downwards. In Plates VI. and VII. the ball is hit thus ; the position of the racket is due to this and not to the application of top-spin. The rise at the end of the follow-through shows that the ball has received its correct height and length. The habit of using the shoulder, bringing it forward a moment *later* than the arm, not *with* the arm, is very important, but may be deferred till later.

Such briefly may stand for elementary explanation and instruction in the forehand drive, but it is quite possible for a man to play for years and never develop out of these elements the cardinal principles of the stroke. They are of paramount importance, and it is their acquisition alone, whether it be conscious or unconscious, that brings the stroke up to a first-class standard.

In the first place there is the question of distance from the ball. One is generally told, quite rightly, to keep well away from the ball, but one does not always understand whether this refers both to length-ways and to sideways distance, nor why it is necessary,

nor, lastly, what distance is best. The advice refers to sideways distance alone. The reasons for it are, firstly, to get the ball at the top of the bound,—it follows if the ball bounds low or if one takes it near the end of the bound, one must be proportionately nearer to it; secondly, to ensure that the arm and wrist shall be in the correct position at the moment of striking. For strokes at or above the height of the shoulder one must of course be a little nearer to the ball, just as for a low bound. The best distance to aim at is, for the shorter stroke, about two feet, for the longer, about three feet from the shoulder, for a ball of average bound.

In the next place, the beginner may be told how essential it is to *time* the stroke and to take the ball at the *top of the bound*. But he wants to know how to effect this; at least he ought to, for the method is not perfectly obvious at first. Timing the ball is the result of many factors, the chief of which will be described in the next paragraph. The secret of getting the ball at top of the bound is this: *your distance lengthways* from the point where the ball hits the ground should be relatively *short*; the nearer up you are, in reason, the better. Therefore, get near the ball. The distance depends entirely on the speed of the stroke and the speed of the ground. The whole position, lengthways and sideways, should be such that the ball is still rising as it comes opposite your body, and is at the top of its bound as it passes your body and until opposite your right foot and shoulder.

The last detail brings us to the chief factor in timing the ball, and absolutely the most vital secret

of hard hitting, use of body-weight and general excellence in the forehand drive. It applies less to the backhand drive, for in this the arm has little power when not somewhat forward. The point is this: wait for the ball. *Do not take it until it is opposite your right foot or shoulder, or at least the centre of your body.* The beginner may do this waiting while pausing after the swing-back, and then as the ball comes up to a point opposite his shoulder, make a second and short swing-back before he comes down on it. To put the matter proverbially, it is far better to take the ball behind your shoulder than in front of your body. Hit the ball at the last possible moment.

It is astonishing how few players realise this important principle, which, by the way, applies also to the service and the smash. It is in the fitness of things that those who do practise it in the forehand drive are in the very front rank of players. The opposite tendency, not waiting till the ball comes up to the racket, is one which, if encouraged, (and it is easy to misinterpret such advice as "get quickly on to the ball," in this way), is one which absolutely checks progress and disheartens many a beginner. The curious but natural thing is, that the more anxious one is to do one's duty by the ball, the more forward one is apt to get to it. The result is that you hit the ball at a point far in advance of the centre of your force and weight. Other results are nervousness, checked strokes and poky shots, varied by cases where you have got your weight so far forward that the stroke seems all right. Exactly the same tendency is seen in some nervous batsmen, who

play forward to everything, and get more and more forward till the inevitable catch is given and taken. By way of comparison it is worth noting that this principle is well seen in association football. To execute a shot at goal with all your weight, it is necessary to delay the kick until the ball is between your feet.

The rule then is—get as near up to the ball as possible and then wait for it. Don't hit till the very last moment. This is the essential factor in timing the ball, and is one secret of S. H. Smith's great drives, which, you may observe, are not executed with any excessive force or rapidity of arm-movement—in fact to a tyro the speed of the ball seems rather miraculous when compared with the movement which produces it. As you progress in accuracy, you may take the ball earlier still, well before the top of the bound. The difference this makes in time is remarkable; your return hits the ground before your opponent realises that your racket has hit the ball. Variety in the speed with which you get on to the ball should also be cultivated; nothing is so disconcerting to an opponent. This, by the way, is one of the facts which make the perfect ground-stroke player more formidable than the perfect volleyer.

To get this double position right, requires eye, judgment, and practice; but it depends more than anything *on your feet*. As is the case in most ball-games, the feet are as important as the hands; it is not so much the stroke itself that is difficult, as the getting into the correct position to make it. Good lawn tennis players are generally good dancers and often good figure-skaters.



PLATE FIVE. M. DECUGIS (FRANCE): FINISH OF BACKHAND DRIVE





The next two principles are perhaps more important still, for the learner is recommended generally to cultivate a good swing. Now this advice is, for the forehand stroke, a case of putting the cart before the horse. Anyone can swing a racket, but it is not anyone who can hit a ball. Learn to strike the ball with accuracy and to control it with firmness before you think of developing your natural swing into a complete and artistic performance. The danger, of course, is that the learner is apt to think that a fine swing is more important than it really is, but *the swing is the least essential part of the stroke*. The observant beginner may, we will suppose, watch E. R. Allen or J. M. Boucher executing their incomparable forehand drives. He notices to his surprise that these players hardly seem to swing back at all, and infers, wrongly of course, that the deadly and mechanical certainty of these drives is in spite of the absence of swing. It is as a matter of fact due to the absence of swing.

Now the principle thus suggested by this instance is that the swing must not be carried too far back, or that there must be a pause before the racket moves forward to the ball. When ready to do so, swing the racket back and upwards to a point slightly behind the shoulder for ordinary strokes, and then hold the racket steady for a moment or two until the ball comes up to it. It is this slight pause and this alone, that by the steady and measuring of the stroke, gives a forehand drive its certainty and mechanical accuracy. It is not too much to say that it is the ultimate secret of the stroke. In order to learn the principle it is well even to exaggerate it,

and after swinging as far as the shoulder only, to keep the racket stationary until the ball is almost on it, and then press the racket on to the ball. You may now dispense with the ordinary method of addressing the ball, as given in the elementary instructions, and use this pause for the same purpose (see Plate I.). When familiarised with the idea and its execution, you may swing farther back, behind the shoulder after the pause, and move straight forward to the ball from this second swing-back. Those experts who swing well back and come forward in what is apparently one movement, still employ this pause, though it is concealed. The common sense of the principle is obvious; it is to ensure that the arm and racket are steady and in the correct plane, and that the stroke is thoroughly judged and measured before the racket moves forward to strike.

The beginner will soon find, if he works on this method, that his follow-through is greatly improved. As already observed, the importance of the follow-through consists in the fact that it is the result of the way in which the ball has been hit and controlled. In the method advocated above, the pent-up force which might have been wasted in a big swing-back, is thus concentrated on the stroke itself, and the follow-through is firm and satisfactory. After a well executed stroke one feels the ball to the very end of the follow-through, and it is the last moment of this which seems to do everything, as is also the case in the American service.

The other cardinal principle concerns the method by which weight is put into the stroke. This is



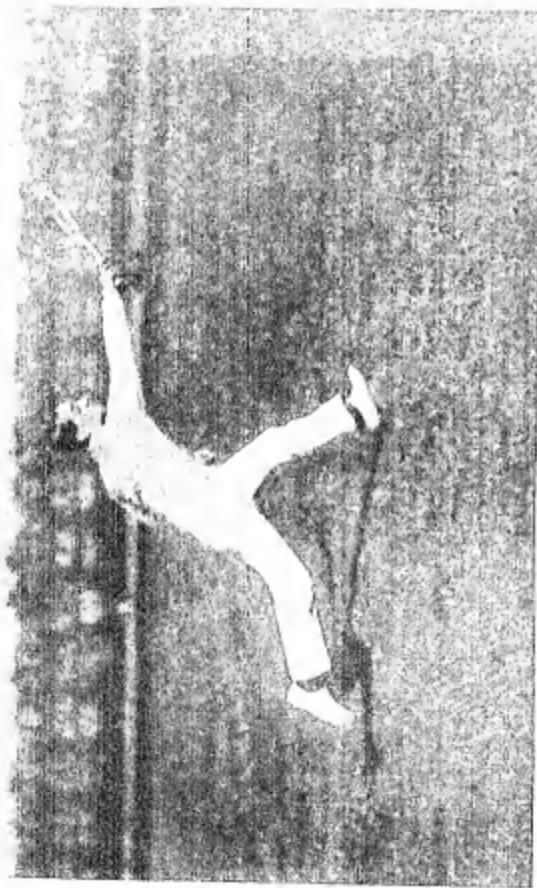


PLATE X. M. DÉCLIGIS (FRANCE): FINISH OF FORTBLAND DRIVE

chiefly effected by bringing the shoulder forward at the stroke and into the follow-through, and, secondarily, by using the general weight of the body, or, to put it in another way, the weight of the left side. Now the principle is this: neither the weight of the right side of the body, worked from the shoulder, nor that of the left side, founded on the left leg and foot, can be effectively brought into the stroke and, what is more important, brought into it without causing oscillation and disturbance of steadiness, unless the weight of the left side of the body is already forward and stationary, before the ball is struck (see Plates VIII. and IX.). The left foot should be planted firmly with the knee slightly bent and the weight of the body resting on it, before you swing back, or at any rate before you swing forward.

The advice sometimes given that the weight should be on the right foot at the beginning of the stroke and then transferred to the left at the moment of striking, is quite mistaken. There are some real analogies between the strokes of golf and lawn tennis, and every golfer knows that to rest the weight on the right foot at the beginning of the stroke and then transfer it, is the worst of bad habits. The rule is that the centre of gravity must not be altered at all during the actual stroke.

This principle, so essential for a strong and steady drive, is perfectly illustrated by S. H. Smith and A. W. Gore. Mr. Paret<sup>1</sup> has observed that H. L. Doherty seems to put all his weight into his drive after hitting the ball. This states the case correctly enough for practical purposes, for what is really

<sup>1</sup> *Lawn Tennis* (American Sportsman's Library).

implied is a firm follow-through, in which every ounce of weight tells because it is properly distributed, some of it being already forward. The left-side weight is, as it were, waiting until the right-side weight joins it at the impact of racket and ball. There they meet and combine forces.

One or two final details may now be put together. For hard hitting it is necessary to take a big stride, and to plant the feet as far apart as possible. This is well illustrated in Plates IV, V. and X. Max Décugis is shewn almost on the run ; in this case of course one does not plant one's self in a stationary manner, but the principle is there all the same. From these photographs the reader will gather some further details, such as the bending of the knees, which are often straightened at the supreme moment of the stroke (see Plates XI. and XII.). Noticeable also is the variety shewn in the bending forward of the body. H. L. Doherty (Plate V.) bends forward very little, Gore (Plate VI.) and Décugis (Plate X.), as far as a fencer in his lunge. The farther forward, other things being equal, the greater the pace of the drive.

Again just as a player of the older game of tennis keeps the face of the racket "open," that is, with the upper edge of the frame bent back at a slight angle, and just as the face of a golf club is slightly set back, so in lawn tennis, with the necessary limitations. For a low bound or low volley the racket should be fairly open ; for a bound about the height of the waist either open or square ; for one that is higher, the racket, on the contrary, should be inclined forward or over, as the ball must be hit downwards. But even





PLATE XI. A. F. WILDING (NEW ZEALAND): MIDDLE OF  
LIFTING DRIVE.

in the last case some players meet the ball with a slightly glancing blow, almost a slice downwards (see Plates III. and XIII.). Where possible the square face is to be preferred. The mechanical advantages of the open face are, first, that, according to the law of the angles of incidence and reflection, the ball is raised so as to get over the net and attain the desired length; secondly, the open face is a preliminary position for obtaining control of the ball. The second point may be illustrated by the very simple and complete form of control which a cricketer exercises when catching the ball; he holds his hand or hands open in order that he may close them. The surface of a racket has not the closing powers of the hand, but the principle involved is the same. The racket is held open in order that it may be closed, and the result is control.

But there is more than this in the subject of control of the ball. The tyro when he meets a first-class player will notice that his most ordinary drives "do" a great deal. Just as a good bowler always has some "stuff" on the ball, even though it may not spin, so it is with a first-class lawn tennis stroke. It is a well known fact that any projectile is most effectively and more directly driven if there is spin on it. The spin produced by the rifling of a gun carries the bullet straighter and farther. The learner must not however suppose that spin is recommended for the standard stroke; what is implied is that in it there is a more or less natural spin, not complete as in the lifting-drive, due to the manner of its execution. The spin must be forward or sideways, or a combination of these, backward spin checks the ball. This

last point is the reason why a chop cannot be a drive. The natural spin of the forehand drive is sideways, simply because it is impossible to hit out away from the body, and therefore there is a tendency, however slight, to bring the racket in. When the ball feels rather out of control, this spin may be emphasized by consciously drawing the racket across towards the body. It is worth while pointing out here that in making any stroke producing rotation, whether a drive, a cross-volley or a service, the plane of the path of the racket across the ball is not curved, but straight. When the face of the racket turns over, or when it rises in the follow-through, the inexperienced may fancy that the blow was curved, but it is merely an optical illusion.

A drive may be hit with extra force by this drawing of the racket in towards your body; the horizontal spin from right to left, not only keeps the ball in court, but lifts it so as to clear the net. This is well shown by A. W. Gore. In his case one can see how the bent-back wrist with the consequent deflection of the face of the racket helps to produce this spin.

Returning to the open face, we may notice that if a drive is begun by slightly glancing the racket downwards as the ball is met, less force is required in the hit; it is useful to vary the clean hit with this deflection especially in the case of high-bounding balls.

Another way of commencing control of the ball is to meet it with the upper edge of the racket slightly bent forward; then just before the moment of impact the head of the racket moves in a little semi-circle

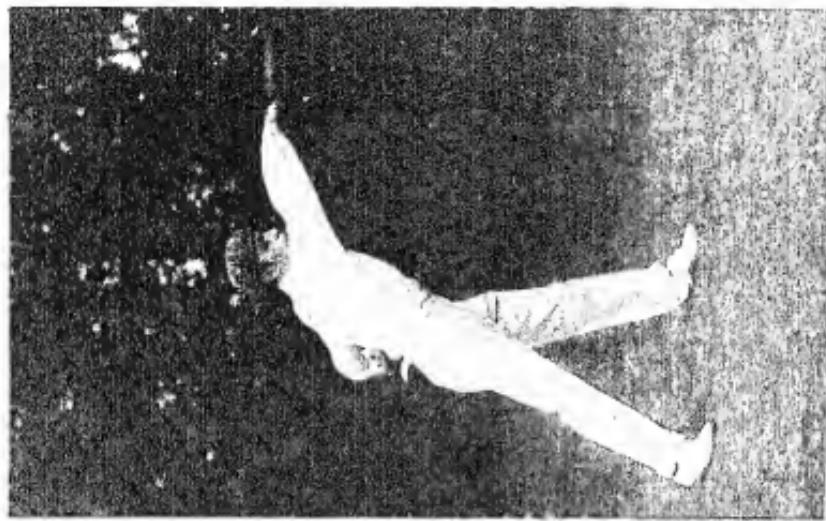


PLATE XIII. P. DE FORMAN (BELGIUM): BEGINNING  
OF LIFTING DRIVE



PLATE XIII. P. DE BONMAN (BELGIUM): BEGINNING  
OF LIFTING DRIVE

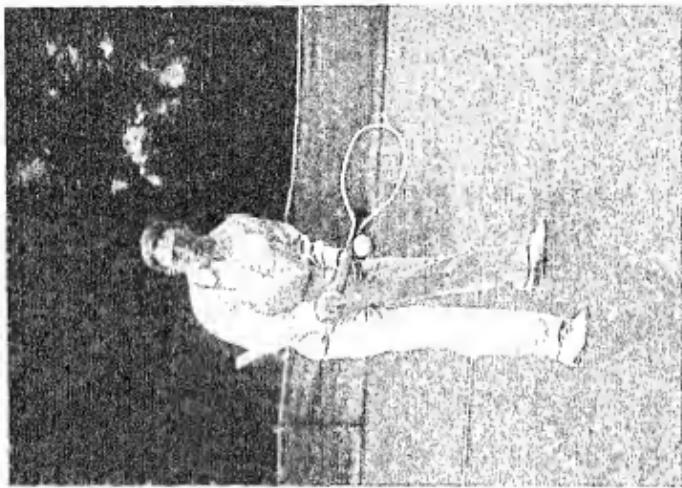


PLATE VIII. G. A. CARRIKA (ENGLAND): MIDDLE  
OF BACKHAND DRIVE

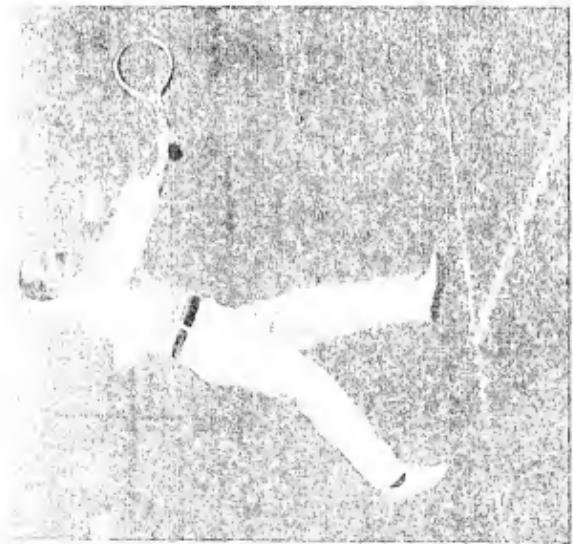


PLATE VIII. G. A. CARRIKA (ENGLAND): MIDDLE  
OF BACKHAND DRIVE

backwards and downwards, and so straight on to the ball. This movement may be seen in E. R. Allen's forehand drive. Some players, as for instance, Ritchie and G. W. Hillyard, whose drive is hit very clean with a straight-faced racket, come round the ball slightly, the movement being the exact opposite of that which results when the wrist is kept well back. The wrist brings the racket forward and round the ball, as if embracing it. This is easier if the elbow is bent.

Putting top on the ball, by turning the racket over in the second half of the impact, is for practical purposes an exception to the law of the straight plane. It is a case of closing the open face, and the result is that the ball is put well away, running and dropping more quickly. It is not so frequently necessary as in the backhand drive. It is chiefly useful in forehand drives of good length across the court, and down the opponent's forehand line. But even for these two directions, a hard-hit clean stroke is more effective; such a drive can be hit almost with the full strength, especially if the racket is brought well across the body in the follow-through. Ordinary top is of little practical use except in hard backhand drives across the court. The old Irish drive was of this nature, a forehand stroke taken low with top applied after impact. It is easy to make when on the run, as W. J. Hamilton used to do; but on hard courts and off a severe stroke it is of little use, especially against a volleyer who knows his business.

One form of drive depends on exaggerated top or over-spin. This is the so-called lifting-drive. It is well executed by A. F. Wilding (Plate XI.) who

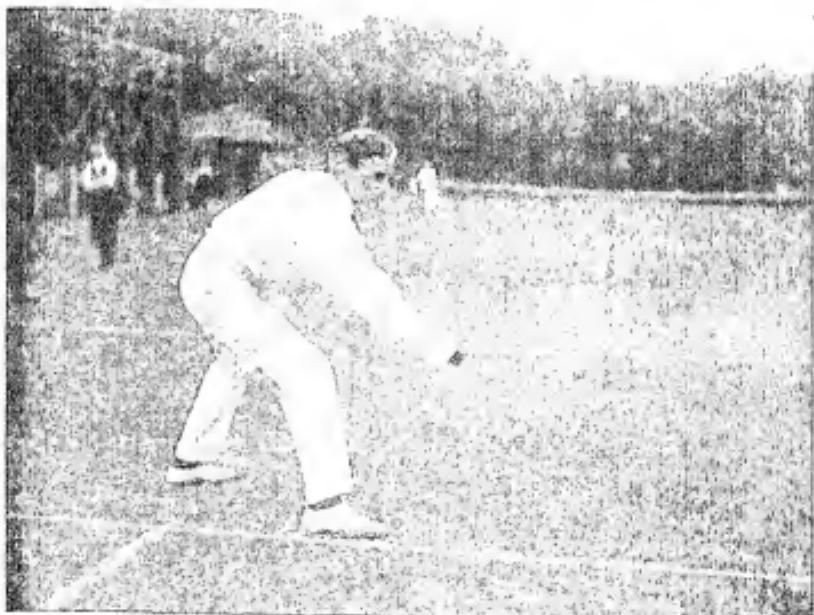
probably plays it in the way best adapted to bring out its advantages, namely, by not subordinating straightness and force to rotation. C. Hobart and Miss Sutton (Plate XV.) use the stroke, the latter employing a grip which increases the spin. This grip is still further exaggerated by H. A. Parker, of New Zealand. P. de Borman employs excessive rotation, the result being a very puzzling curl and break, but the stroke so made cannot be placed with any mastery and it is very fatiguing to the fingers and arm (see Plates XII<sup>a</sup>. and XII<sup>b</sup>.). The lifting-drive is effected thus:—the elbow being bent and up, the racket meets the ball with an upward and forward glancing blow, “brushing” the ball as it has been graphically put. The upward movement of the racket should be very vigorous, but not too vertical, otherwise pace and direction are sacrificed. The important point is that, to get the top-spin, the ball must be hit on its lower side. The grip for this stroke should be well behind the racket (see Plate XII.). The peculiarities of this drive are that it possesses a very high trajectory, descends very rapidly and rises quickly. Just before the ground is reached, the rate of propulsion decreases, and thus the spin has more effect; hence the “dive” which is characteristic of the stroke. The player can hit very hard without any fear of the ball going out, while for short strokes the dive of the ball is very effective. It has been tried for the backhand, but it is not suited to the anatomical position of the bones of the arm. As compared with the standard stroke the lifting drive is more tiring, and it is not so easy to put body-weight into it. There is moreover less



PLATE XI. MISS SUTTON (AMERICA); BEGINNING OF FOREHAND DRIVE



PLATE XVI. R. E. DOHERTY (ENGLAND): FINISH OF BACKHAND DRIVE



possibility of steering the ball, since the follow-through leaves the ball, as it were, immediately after impact (see Plate XI.).

To return to the standard stroke, one may remind the learner that it is graded. For half-shots the wrist is chiefly employed as in short cross or side-line strokes. This wrist stroke is also valuable for snapping up shooting balls or balls that can only just be reached; a very open racket is useful here. A cut lob of a dangerous kind, often winning the rest, may be effected by this stroke off a ball that to all appearance was killed.

The general principles of position and timing apply to the backhand drive, but owing to the anatomical differences involved they do not admit of such complete application. The backhand drive is more important in one sense than the forehand, in so far as it is less frequently brought to perfection and certainly is more difficult to acquire. The forehand drive is the staple of the game, but it is false economy to run round every ball and take it forehanded—position is sure to be sacrificed. The learner should endeavour to make his backhand drive as good, relatively, as his forehand. He must be able, when necessary, to kill the ball with a hard well-placed backhand drive, as effectively and cleanly as on the forehand. A defective grip has prevented many players from acquiring a really masterly backhand drive. The grip should be adjusted so that when the ball is hit with a horizontal racket, the face being square, the fingers, wrist and forearm can do their work freely (see Plate XIV. for one form of grip, and Plate VIII. for another). A tyro who has no notion

whatever of the movements involved in the backhand can get some notion of them by hitting objects with a walking-stick. The movements of shoulder and body may be understood even by this sort of propædeutic. The position should be much more sideways than for the forehand, especially when a full stroke is to be taken, or when one is driving down the opponent's forehand line (see Plates XVI. and XVII.). Here the right foot should be to the left of a line, drawn parallel to the side line through the left foot (see Plate XVII.). The player's back will be almost turned to the net. For anatomical reasons the ball cannot be taken so late or so far back as in the forehand drive (see Plate XVIII.). It is helpful to bend the head down, so as to look more or less in the plane of the stroke, the line of sight being brought down to the level of the ball (see Plate XIX.). This is noticeable in the very accurate backhand strokes of H. Roper Barrett. The follow-through in a full stroke comes right across the body and the racket finishes about the height of the shoulder (see Plates VIII. XVI. and XX.). It may assist beginners to point out that in both forehand and backhand drives, the finish of the follow-through means the point past which the arm and racket cannot go; let them move as far as they can until stopped by the position of the body and the laws of nature. The body from the hips upward turns round as the shoulder follows the arm. As before, it must be remembered that the shoulder joint should move forward after the arm, not with it; the work of hitting the ball must be consciously performed by the arm first. The left toe may act as a sort of pivot.



*PLATE XVII. M. DÉCUGIS (FRANCE): BEGINNING OF BACKHAND DRIVE*

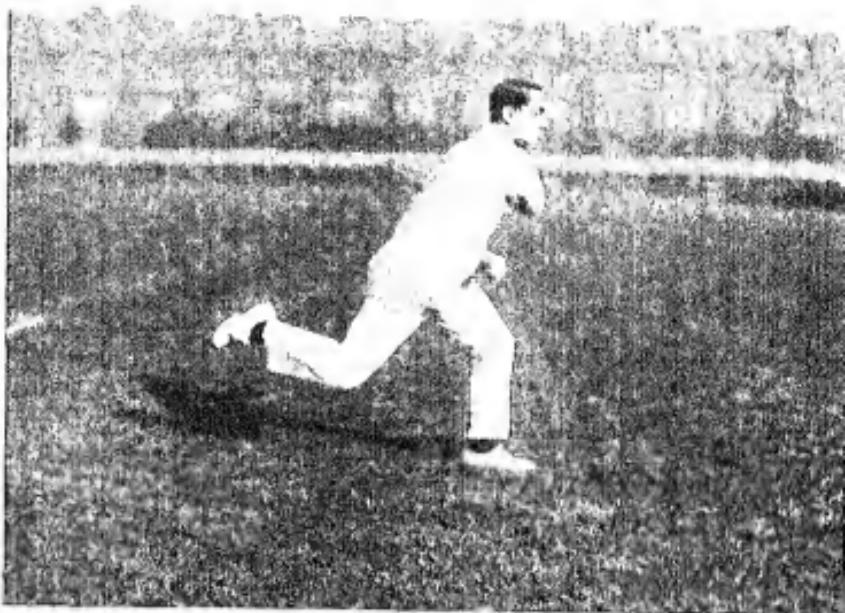


PLATE XIX. M. DÉCUGIS (FRANCE): FINISH OF FOREHAND DRIVE



PLATE XIX. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA): FOREHAND DRIVE

For drives across court it is useful to put top on ; such drives are very useful for finishing a rest.

As in one form of the forehand drive, so in the backhand the racket comes round the ball. Here the wrist, which of course should be bent back and rigid, comes into play and directs the course of the ball. One should feel one's wrist in the backhand stroke. It is possible to play backhand drives with a draw of the racket from left to right across the body, as W. V. Eaves sometimes does, but there is not the same control over the direction of the ball. But both this and all forms of short strokes, especially stop-strokes, should be practised, both forehand and backhand.

Lastly, it cannot be too firmly impressed on the learner's mind that the foundation of a good game is clean and hard hitting. Hard, well-placed drives are the backbone of the attacking game, and to kill the ball off the ground one must be able to bang it out of reach. To do this and to play good length drives without tiring, to apply the maximum of force with the minimum of effort, it is necessary to hit from the shoulder. If the directions previously given are carried out, the trick of this can be acquired by anyone to whom it does not come naturally. The player will soon find the value of a big stride not only for covering the court, but for executing hard drives. It is only by planting the feet well apart that a hard drive can be adequately carried out.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE VOLLEY AND ITS VARIETIES

An orderly evolution—Volleys at the height of the waist or shoulder—Variety of direction essential—How Brookes “pigeon-holes” the ball—Principles and practice of the plain straight volley—The oblique or tangential impact—Extremes of elevation—The low volley—Placing the ball at will overhead—The hard smash—The backhand smash—Further points as to method—Cross-court volleys—Stop- and drop-volleys—The importance of deep volleying—General principles of defence against the volleyer—The half-volley

**T**HE volley, more than any other stroke, is characteristic of lawn tennis. In no other game is it possible to do so much with the ball at full pitch. The reason is the comparative lightness and elasticity of the inflated india-rubber sphere, a reason also which allows the game generally a greater variety of strokes than is possessed by any game in the world. In some respects the volley itself is capable of more variety than the other strokes of the game—in the matter, that is, of the angle of direction—since it can be played in almost any position and from almost all parts of the body. Without going into historical detail, it is sufficient to point out that the volley like the drive and the service, has passed through an orderly evolution; the development in brief, has been from a short stroke, effected by the wrist



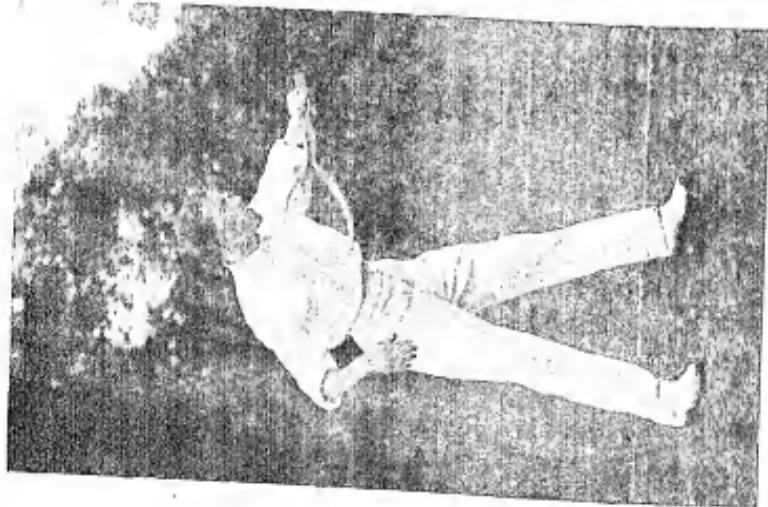


PLATE I. N. V. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA):  
BEGINNING OF BACKHAND VOLLEY

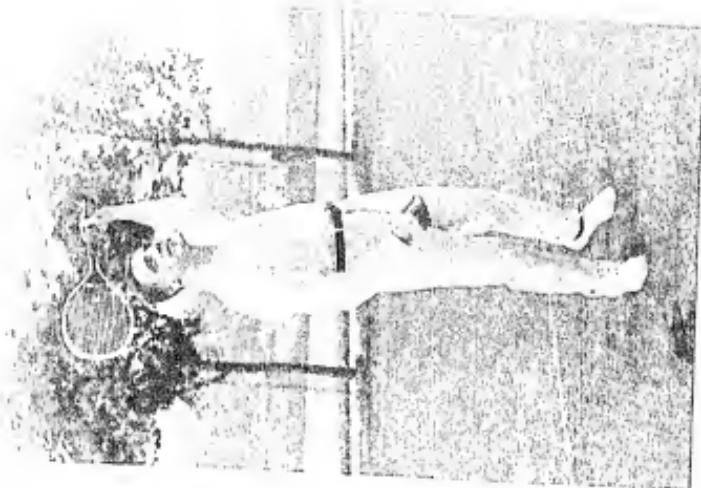


PLATE II. BEALS WRIGHT (AMERICA):  
BEGINNING OF FOREHAND SMASH

alone, to a longer stroke, in which fingers, arm, shoulder and body may also take their part. The result is greater delicacy, greater precision and greater weight and force. To these results is to be added the application of spin.

The beginner will find little difficulty in learning forehand and backhand volleys when about the height of the waist or shoulder. It is best to play them with the arm slightly bent; in the follow-through, of course, the arm is extended. The sideways position is not so pronounced as for the drive, especially in the case of backhand volleys. The knees should be slightly bent; for low volleys one should stoop as far as one can. For volleys of an average height it is useful to bend the head down to the stroke, so as to see along the line of flight (see Plate I.). The ball should be hit earlier than in the drive. As soon as ordinary accuracy in returning simple easy shots is acquired, the player must cultivate variety of direction. The fingers and wrist play an important part here; a good volleyer must possess or acquire strength of finger and wrist. Except in hard-hit volleys the follow-through is carried along the line of flight of the ball; the racket at the finish pointing to the place to which the ball is travelling. The swing-back should be minimised as much as possible, the ordinary volley being somewhat of a push, and also giving the player less time than other strokes (see Plate I.). In accordance with this principle, it is useful when waiting for a volley to hold the racket with the head pointing to the net. This position also enables the racket to move most quickly to one

side or the other, according as the ball comes to the forehand or the backhand. Greater power of accuracy, it will be found, can be secured when the racket is held rather short (see Plates II. and III.). The ball must not be merely *met* by the face of the racket, it must be consciously hit and firmly followed. In the case of Brookes the spectator can almost see him *pigeon-holing* the ball with his follow-through.

It will be convenient here to throw into relief two principles, which are brought into greatest contrast perhaps in high volleys. The one is the use of the plain straight stroke with the face of the racket at right angles to the ball, and the other is oblique or tangential impact, the cut. As a rule, it is advisable to have the face of the racket slightly open, that is, with the upper edge of the frame bent back. For low volleys, it is necessary, the angle of the racket automatically raising the plane of the ball's flight, so that it clears the net. Even in volleys at the height of the waist it is useful. These volleys are generally hit with a straight stroke. If the ball were slightly higher than the shoulder it could be hit in the same way. But it could also be hit with a downward glance or slice, the result being a cross-volley, at any sharp angle. This stroke is well exemplified by H. L. Doherty, and is very effective from the right-hand court. In the other method it could be hit across at the same angle, but to do so the body would have to move round, and the fingers and wrist would have more to do. The latter method, exemplified by Brookes, requires more careful watching and guiding of the ball, while the other

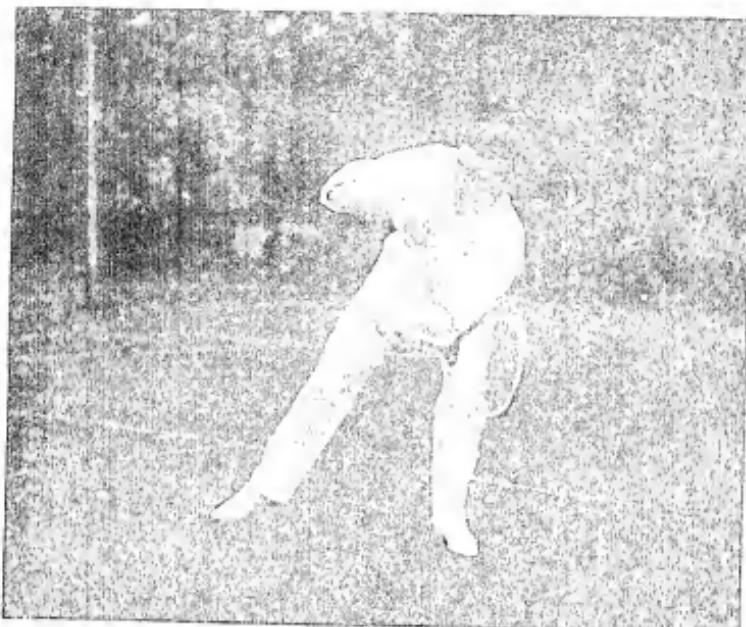


PLATE III. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA): LOW FOREHAND VOLLEY





may degenerate, if the player is careless, into a slash. The same contrast is brought out in the so-called smash, which may be hit either straight or obliquely. All this applies equally well to backhand cross-volleys.

There is still another method of volleying a ball that is no higher than the shoulder nor lower than the waist, that is to say, a ball that is at the height of a fairly high bound. The method is to drive it as if it were off the ground, with a straight arm. Some authorities deprecate this stroke as being risky, but when the ball has appropriate elevation and velocity, the stroke is no more risky, and is far more effective than an ordinary volley. It has the merit of possessing the capacity, especially in a double, to kill the ball outright. Gore, S. H. Smith and E. R. Allen play this stroke with great accuracy. Applying other varieties of the drive, such a ball may be lifted or hit with a draw. The latter is frequent on the backhand and may be used for instance when a player's position is such that he cannot drive the stroke home (see Plate IV.). The draw keeps the ball low but above the net and the angle at which it passes over the net is often sharp, a fact which renders it difficult to take. The name "scissors" sometimes given to this stroke, well illustrates its character.

Extremes of elevation in the volley are exemplified by the lowest of low volleys, when the ball is within two inches of the ground, and by a smash for which the player has to leap into the air. The smash or overhead volley is similar to the service and is played in much the same way (see Plate II.). The beginner

may note that the chief reason for failure is omitting to keep the eye on the ball right up to the moment of striking. He should get well under the ball, so that it is rather behind than in front of his head, except in the case of a slow and easy short ball near the net, which can be hit down and out of reach without delay. By varying the plane in which the racket moves to the ball, to right or left, straight or oblique, the ball can be placed at will with great precision, if little or no cut is used. For straight quiet smashes Brookes is a model; he puts the ball away with mechanical accuracy. No swing is used, but often the fingers and wrist have much to do, if the angle of return is very different from the angle of approach or if the volleyer has to meet a hard drive. Command of a volley like this is very useful in running-up on the service (see Plate V.). H. L. Doherty's is no less perfect; he uses more swing and the direction is equally well concealed in this way. The hard smash is less frequently necessary in singles than in doubles; in the latter one hits a ball as hard as possible, in a single one would often be better advised to play a dropping stroke. As the name implies, in this stroke the ball is allowed as it were to slip off the face of the racket. For dealing with lobs on the backhand H. L. Doherty's method should be considered. The ball is never taken backhanded; the player seems to float quietly backward or backward and sideways with the ball, which he places firmly and often severely across the court. This can be done while running (see Plate VI.). The backhanded smash, as employed to perfection by the late H. S. Mahony, should be learned, it being useful for

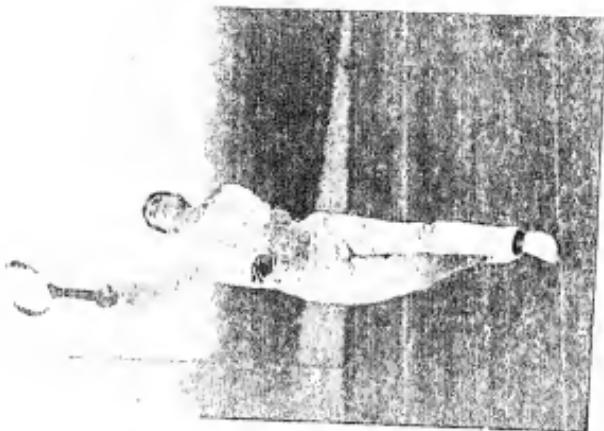


PLATE 17. H. L. DOHERTY (ENGLAND);  
RUNNING SMASH

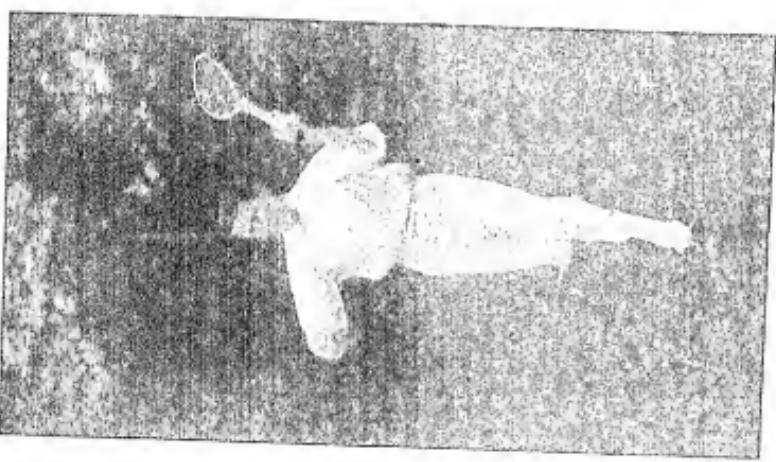


PLATE 17. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA);  
RUNNING IN TO KILL

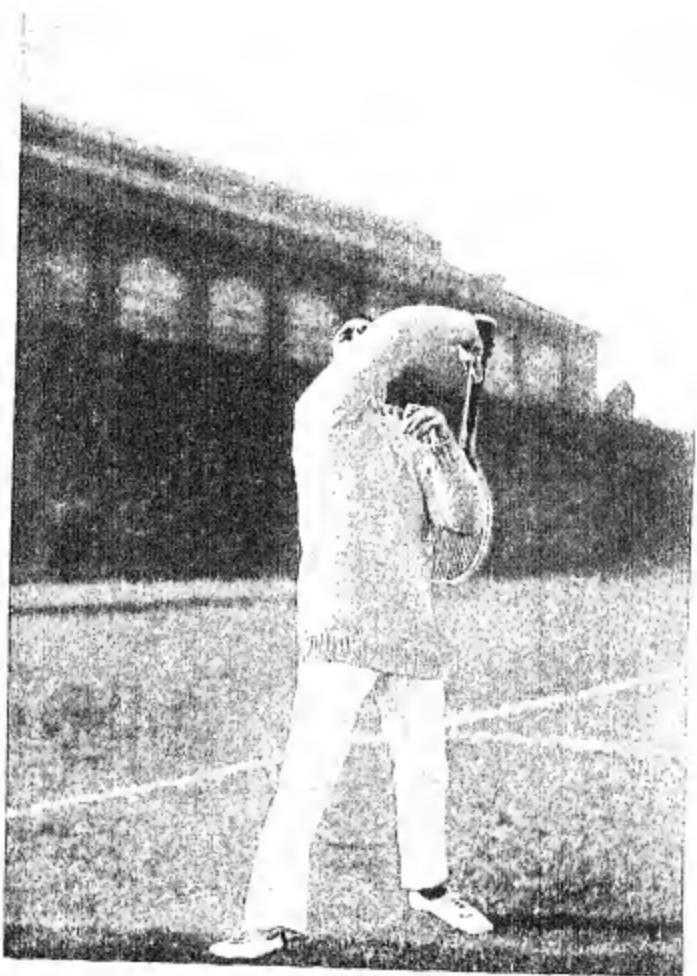


PLATE 177. M. DÉCUGIS (FRANCE): BEGINNING OF BACKHAND SMASH

short balls well on the backhand side-line, and is frequently required in doubles (see Plate VII.).

A thorough command of the overhead volley is essential in both singles and doubles; in the latter especially, for here the lob is so obvious a method of defence (the court being more guarded than in a single). A pair who cannot smash well and with variety are, other things being equal, doomed to failure. Some points as to method are here noteworthy. The racket may be held down by the side until the ball is within reach, or it may be held in the air. In the former case the ball must be well judged, or there must be a pause to steady the stroke before the ball is struck. The player must learn the trick of running backwards, but when the lob goes deep into the court he must turn and run forwards until he is underneath the ball, when he turns once more to face the net. In smashing lobs it is important to remember your whereabouts in the court, otherwise you may fail to clear the net or may go wrong in length or placing.

As a general principle it is, of course, better to volley down than up. A rising ball is always in danger when the opponent is near the net. Nevertheless, the low volley must be employed at times, and in certain of its forms, for example in cross-volleying, the stroke may be developed into a winning shot. The low volley can be brought to such perfection that a hard well-placed return may be made from a ball that is within a foot of the ground. E. R. Allen plays a backhand volley of this nature with decisive effect; the ball keeps low, crosses the opponent to his right and pitches almost on the side-line. A ball

can be volleyed with fair precision when within two inches of the ground, the movement being somewhat like that of the mashie shot in golf. Here we may note that many such strokes are made from the side or end of the racket, not from its centre. The structure of the modern racket admits of this.

For the low volley the player must bend down as far as he can (see Plates III. IV. and VIII.), and the racket should be as horizontal as possible. If the racket is vertical it is difficult to effect anything but a defensive stroke. Sometimes, however, as in quick play at the net in doubles, it is necessary to play the ball almost off the feet with a vertical racket, much as a batsman blocks a cricket ball. This stroke is well played by R. F. Doherty. For other than defensive purposes the low volley is either a cross or a stop-volley. Very effective volleys at an extremely sharp angle can be made when the ball is within a foot of the ground and close to the side-line. F. W. Payn was good at these. The racket must be as horizontal as possible. Steering is assisted, if the head of the racket is kept up. The chief point about the stroke, however, is that it is a glancing hit almost underneath the ball. Here as in all cut strokes, the path taken by the racket is straight, not curved, on a parallel slightly lower than the flight of the ball and not necessarily upwards, the open face raising the ball sufficiently. On the backhand the same result can be effected by a hook-volley, instead of a slice. The wrist is bent sharply round (see Plate IX.). It is not too much to say that the player must have a repertory of cross-volleys, ranging from above the shoulder to his feet, both forehand and backhand.

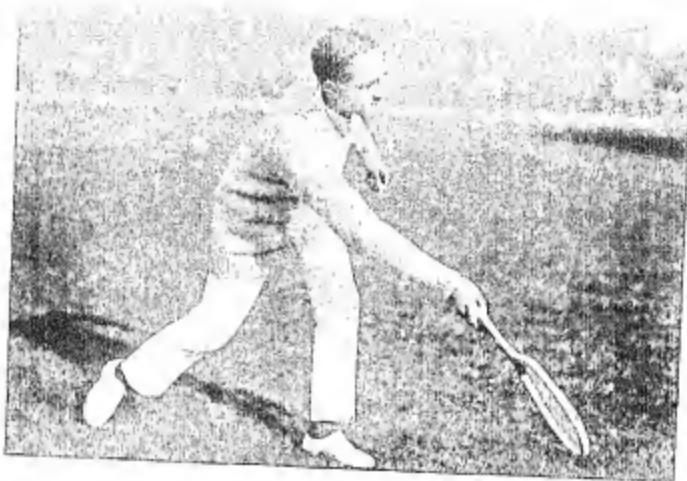


PLATE VII. M. DÉCUGIS (FRANCE): LOW FOREHAND DROP-VOLLEY





Passing now to stop- and drop-volleys, we require still greater delicacy of touch than in the cross-volley. These are no less valuable than the latter for killing the ball, and are especially effective in a single. The stop-volley can be made from the hardest drive, and the ball drops practically dead. The player must be as near the net as possible and in one variety of the stroke he allows the racket to give as it meets the ball. By turning the wrist, as in the hook-volley, the ball can be made to move almost parallel to the net. Pim was proficient at this. In another variety the racket is held vertically, and moves downwards with a sort of dig, as seen in the photograph of Brookes (Plate X.); in yet another the vertical racket moves slowly upwards, with a kind of drag, allowing the ball to fall quietly off it (see Plate XI.). The latter varieties can be played when the ball is fairly low; in the others the ball should be higher than the net. A stroke which is half a cross-volley and half stop, may be made by a sort of oblique stab. The ball comes across at a sharp angle and pitches very short. The lob-volley is almost sufficiently explained by its name. It is useful in a double, when all four men are at the net. It should be fast enough and high enough, or it will be easily killed. Dr. Eaves is one of its few masters.

Though it need not be supposed that the volley is only important as an attacking or deciding stroke—in doubles more often than not, and in singles sometimes, it is defensive—yet owing to the greater quickness of return and the less time allowed to the opponent, the volley should, by preference be em-

ployed to weaken the defence, to get the opponent out of position, or to finish the rest. For killing the ball, hard hitting as well as good placing are as essential as in the drive. The way in which R. F. Doherty, for instance, finishes a rest in a double by a hard backhand volley driven right between the opponents, well shows the decisive character of a good volley. The beginner may note here that the backhand volley is very easy to place well and to hit hard if the arm is bent and the stroke well carried through.

When placed down the court, the volley should be deep enough to prevent the opponent getting back to it; the chance for this rarely occurs in a single. Generally speaking, the best direction for a kill is across the court, both when the opponent is up and when he is back. The sharper the angle is, the better. The beginner is advised when running-up after a good drive to pause at the service line until he knows where the return is coming, and then to dart in to the net and execute the volley. For quick volleying in a double it is advisable for some players to hold the racket with the backhand grip; a quick forehand volley can be well played thus, whereas a backhand volley cannot be satisfactorily achieved with the forehand hold.

The necessity of placing the ball down the centre of the court in order that the volleyer may have the best chance of reaching the return has often been referred to. A consideration of the diagonals of the single court, where they cross the net, proves the general usefulness of this method. The player will also observe that when following up, for instance, a

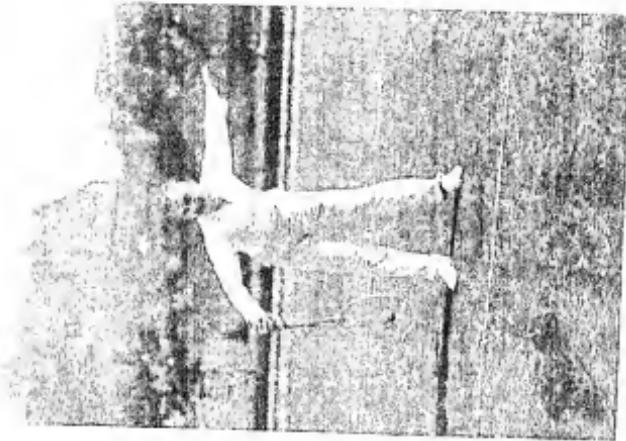


PLATE NO. W. V. EAVES (ENGLAND):  
LOW BACKHAND "DRAG" VOLLEY

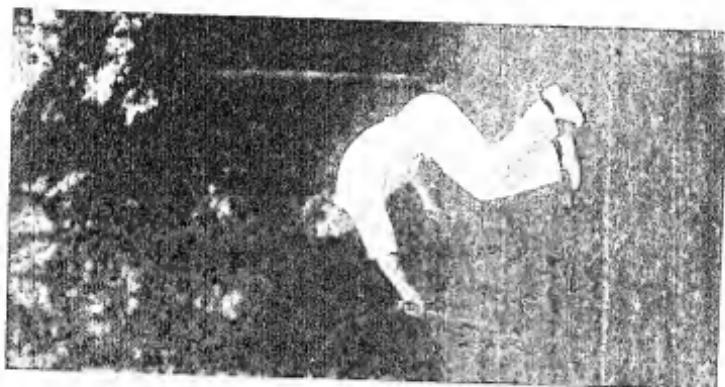


PLATE NO. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA):  
LOW BACKHAND STOP-VOLLEY



reverse American service from the right-hand court it is best to keep rather to the left of the centre of the net. In fact, he will find that it is useful to cultivate the power of swerving in his stride as a football player does. When a man is on the run it is useful to put the ball to the place he has just left, especially if the return be made at a sharper angle. This applies to the drive equally. For instance, when the court is quite open for a cross-volley and the opponent anticipating this is already moving in the required direction, a volley down the side-line or a stop-volley, may effectually finish the rest. I have referred to the centre of the court and keep to the last a no less emphatic injunction to the player not to trust too much to this position. A good driver can pass a man from the centre of the baseline with reasonable success, and can always put him out of position. A player should therefore remember that hard driving into the corners of the court, especially diagonally, is no less useful a preliminary to running-up to the net.

With regard to the general principles of defence against the volleyer, it must be noted that if his volley is at all decisive, the only hope is, if you reach it, to lob. On the other hand if the cross-volley is just a shade too slow or too little across, the return may pass him outright. Thus bad back-play generally beats bad volleying. The persistent volleyer works for an opening by the service and by well-placed volleys into the back of the court, until he has an opportunity for a cross-court kill. The opponent must calculate his own chances of driving down the lines so as to pass him or at least get him

out of position, in which latter case he ought to pass him on the other side next shot. It is important to remember that it is almost impossible to pass a man who is at the net by hitting across the court; you must try for the lines. If however he is not quite up, or only at the service-line, then is the time for a pass across the court.

The half-volley is extremely valuable as a last resort, when out of position, or as a time-saver. It is no less valuable, however, when brought to perfection, as an attacking stroke, precisely because of the difference in time. The half-volley is, of course, played as a rule with the racket more or less vertical. The stroke is made chiefly with the wrist and forearm; the follow-through should be carefully attended to, here the head of the racket should be kept as low as possible. At the finish it should not be more than two or three feet from the ground. This is the secret of keeping a hard half-volley in court. G. A. Caridia is the best exponent of this stroke, employing it as a means of attack with great success.

It is hardly necessary to explain that a half-volley consists in a stroke by which the ball is played within a few inches after its impact with the ground. What does require a word is the development which it has received beyond this primary form. This development is similar to what has been done with the half-volley in batting. Jessop hits the ball when it is really a good way from the ground, and keeps his eye on it as much as if it were a long hop. So in lawn tennis; the ball can be taken and driven hard when it is from one to three feet behind its point of

impact with the ground. The gain in time is enormous, as it is from any rising ball. The rest may be finished before the opponent has even begun to move. The rising ball as ordinarily implied is taken much later than this half-volley; the two strokes merge into one another. Thus, a player like Caridia can drive the ball at any point between its point of contact with the ground and the top of its bound, not to mention the later and much easier half of its progress towards the second bound. A very useful stroke may be termed the stop-half-volley. A volleyer near the net receives a return at his feet, too short to volley. He can return this with a delicate half-volley slightly cut or stopped, so that the ball will fall dead just over the net. Holcombe Ward, the American, executes this stroke to perfection.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE STANDARD SERVICE

The value of variety—Position of the feet—Need of a light and easy pose—Throwing up the ball—Some important points emphasized—The swing-back—The contact of the racket with the ball—After the impact—Where the racket should finish—Body-weight and its distribution—Imparting “devil” to the stroke—Good length essential—The relation of the first service to the second—Placing the service in the corners—Variation by natural spin

THE service is a formal attack, and though its *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem* are limited, its positive advantages are great. The same is the case in many ball games; even in fives, where the service may have to be made according to the taste of the striker-out, the server has an advantage from his position. There is a close analogy between the service and bowling in cricket or pitching in baseball, and some general principles are common to all three, such as the advantages of change of pace, change of direction and change of spin. Variety is invaluable in the service, and the learner is recommended, as soon as he has mastered the plain standard service, to practise varying it until he has the same command of the ball as that possessed by a first-class bowler.

The same procedure as was recommended in the

case of the drive may be followed by the beginner, that is, he may commence with a half-arm action. For the standard service the grip is the same as for the forehand drive. It should be loose until the moment of striking the ball. As always, it is to be remembered what an important part can be played by the ends of the fingers. The thumb can also be used to control the direction of the ball. Take two balls in the left hand—with a little practice three will be found easy to carry and useful in case of a let—and stand about a yard or a yard and a half to the right or left of the centre of the base-line. Serving into both courts should be practised equally. There is a good deal of difference between the two in the angle at which the stroke is delivered. Until some proficiency is attained, it will be best, as in learning other strokes, to hold the racket short. The left toe should be about six inches behind the base-line, and, from the right court, should point either straight along the line which the ball is to follow, or a little to the right of it. The right foot should be slightly to the right of and about two feet behind the left. From the left court if the same position is taken relatively to the flight of the ball the right foot will be to the left of a line drawn through the left foot parallel to the side-lines. The pose should be light and easy, and it is useful to swing to and fro, changing the weight from one foot to the other by way of exercise in balance. The place where you intend to put the ball should be marked with the eye, but as soon as the ball is thrown up the ball alone must be watched. Faults are due to nothing so much as to the omission to

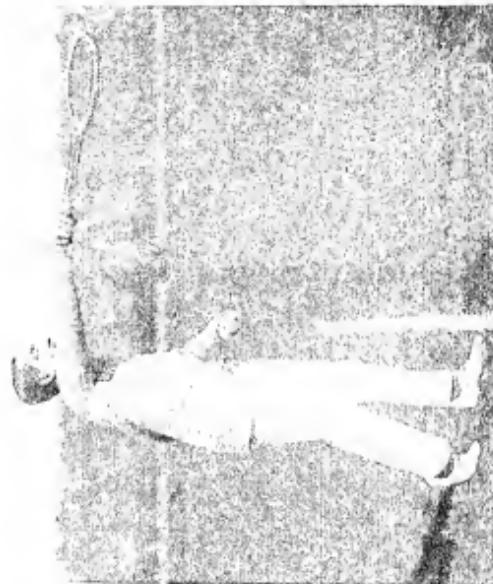
keep the eye on the ball. The space into which you aim to direct the ball should at first be a large area, practically the whole of the backward half of the court. Practice will soon diminish this, just as in revolver-shooting one proceeds from large to small bulls. An expert server can place the ball at will within a space less than a foot in diameter.

To commence, put the left hand and the face of the racket together, in front of you, previous to throwing them up. This is equivalent to addressing the ball. Then throw the ball up slightly above and to the right of the head, rather behind than in front, and at the same time raise the racket so that its face is a few inches behind the ball when the latter is descending. Then hit the ball before it has fallen too far for the arm to move comfortably. The above is a method useful for those who have had no experience at all. At first the stroke will be a feeble sort of pat, but you must gradually lengthen the throw-up of the ball, and the other movements will in time become longer also. It is useful to practise throwing up the ball before the racket is raised, and *vice versa*. The throw-up of the ball is as important a matter as anything in the service, and it is not the least difficult. The service depends very much on the accuracy and straightness of the throw-up. It is obvious that if the ball describes a curve it will be less easy to hit. The eye should be kept on the ball until the racket is actually touching it. The mental photograph of the opponent's court and of the place where you intend to serve is quite enough for the most accurate service.

PLATE II. R. F. DOHERTY (ENGLAND): MIDDLE OF SERVICE



PLATE I. M. DÉUGIS (FRANCE): MIDDLE OF SERVICE



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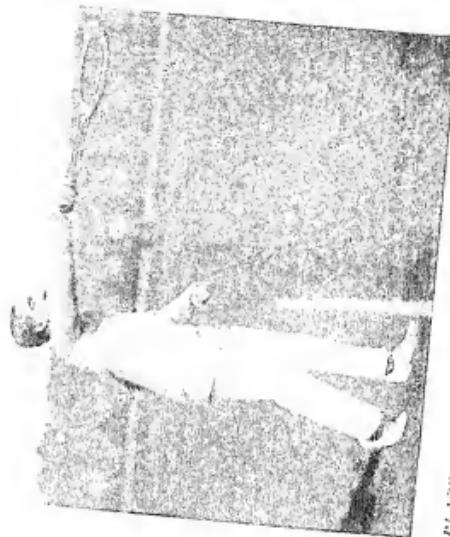


PLATE II: R. F. DOHERTY (ENGLAND); MIDDLE OF SERVICE



PLATE I: M. DÉCROS (FRANCE); MIDDLE OF SERVICE

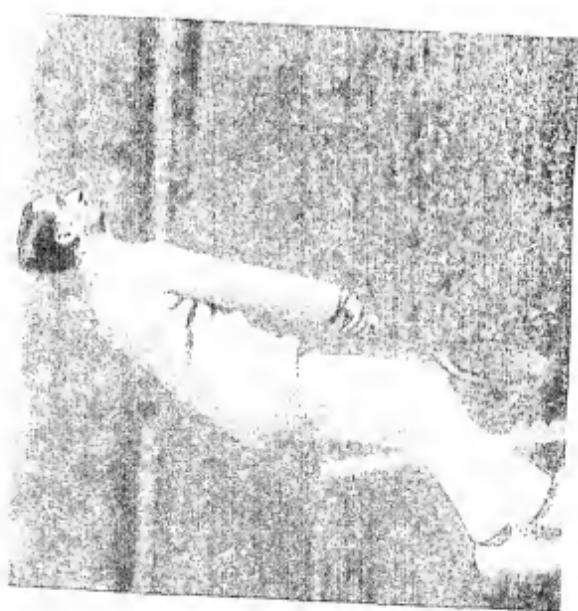


PLATE IV. M. DECHETS (FRANCE): FINISH OF SERVICE



PLATE V. R. F. DOHERTY (ENGLAND):  
FINISH OF SERVICE

The gradual lengthening of all the movements will lead to the standard service, now to be described. The right arm and racket, the position being taken up, are held loosely down by the right knee. Then the ball is thrown up to about two or four feet above the head, to the right and behind. Meanwhile the trunk is bent back and the right shoulder pressed down, so as to get body-weight and to hit the ball from a point as far back as possible (see Plate I.). The racket is swung up and over the right shoulder; the wrist is quite loose so that the head of the racket drops behind the back like an Indian club. It should be allowed to drop as far as it will go (see Plate II.). It is then brought up and forward with the action of throwing; the stroke being timed so that when the ball is struck, the arm is fully extended and the elbow no longer bent (see Plates III. and IV.). After the impact the movement must not be checked; the follow-through must be firm and carried to the end. The racket finishes past the left knee, having described almost a semicircle since it met the ball (see Plates V. and VI.). It may also finish straight in front or past the right knee (see Plates VII. and VIII.). In the latter case the service is tending in the direction of the American. In the former it will be hit cleaner but with less force than in the first of the three positions. The knees of course should be bent. The right shoulder must work freely coming forward round and down during the follow-through. As to body-weight and its distribution, this may be already forward on the left leg, or may be transferred from the right to the left. It must be remembered, however, in the latter case,

that this transference is impossible unless some weight is already on the left. A good grip should be taken by the toes and ball of the foot; it is almost essential to rise on the toes. One or both will be used as a sort of pivot for the body as it swings round and forward (see Plate VIII.).

The server must not fix himself too much, or he will not be able to start quickly for the return. In the next place it is necessary for the control of the ball, to prevent sailing and to give some "devil" to the stroke, so as to make it "whip" off the ground, that the racket should meet the ball with its face not quite square. In ordinary cases the ball is hit slightly on its right side. If, when this is done, the racket is also well over the ball, the result is a kicking service.

Some further details follow. A good length is, as in bowling, one of the first things the server must acquire. But for variety, a short service is often useful. The second service should not be a mere safety stroke; some little determination and practice will easily make it as certain and as good as the first. One should notice, if the first is a fault, what the mistake was, and correct it in the second, thinking of nothing else. A good way to regard the relation of the first service to the second, is the very opposite of the view taken by the inexperienced. Thus the first service may be regarded by the learner as a trial ball, or sighting-shot, and the second service as the real thing. It is quite useless for the beginner to serve the first service as hard as he can, and then to pat the second. A fast second service is useful when not expected; a



PLATE I. R. F. DOHERTY (ENGLAND):  
BEGINNING OF SERVICE.



PLATE II. MRS. LAMBERT CHAMBERS  
(ENGLAND): BEGINNING OF SERVICE.

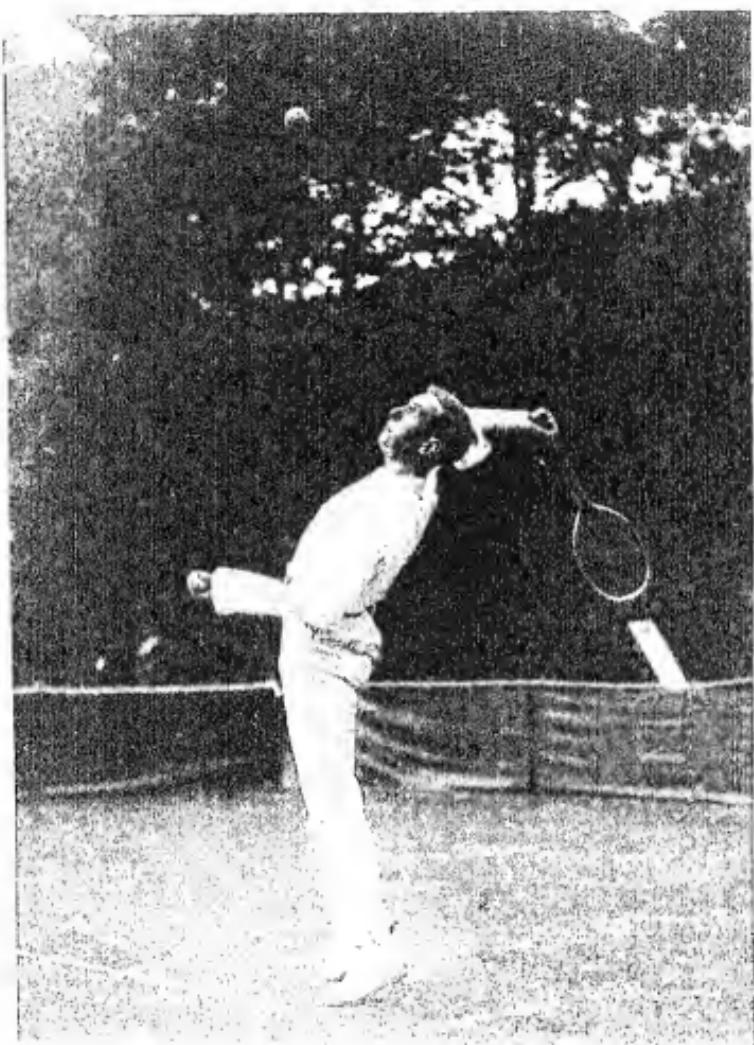


PLATE III. F. L. RISLEY (ENGLAND): BEGINNING OF SERVICE

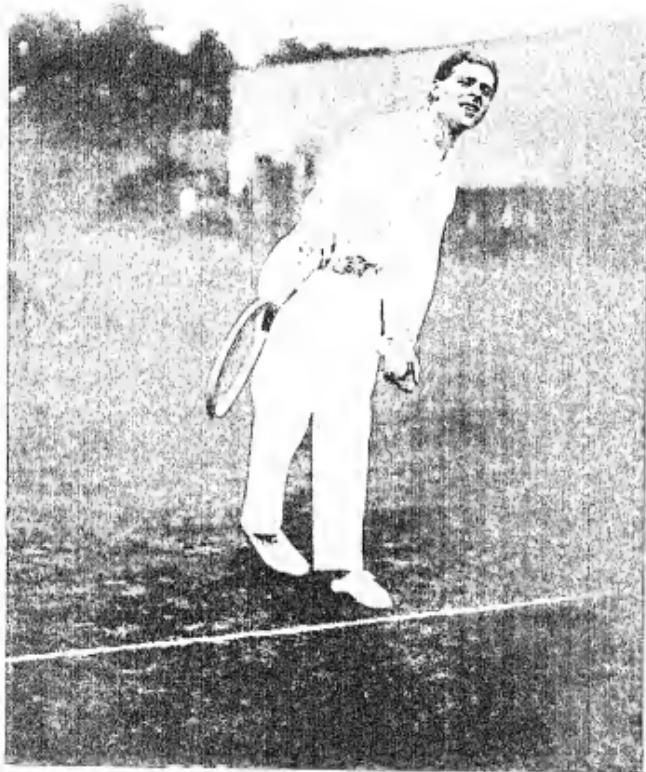


PLATE VII. H. L. DOHERTY (ENGLAND): FINISH OF SERVICE



slow service gives the server more time to get into position or up to the net. This is the great advantage of a heavy spin, as in the American service. A straight service varied by spins is a useful form of variety. The corners of the court are, as a rule, the best points to aim at. Serving down the centre assists a volleyer, but it is somewhat dangerous with the backhand court. A twisting or swerving service is most effective if delivered not from the corner of the court, but from a point nearer the centre. With these services one should not overdo the placing into the corner, the angle of the break is often more effective and less likely to lead to a pass, if the service is placed in the centre of the service line.

The standard service can be varied by exaggerating its natural spin. Cutting the ball sometimes rests the arm; it also helps the server if he wishes to deliver a slower service. In this case also the chance of a fault is reduced.

This point leads up to a consideration of what may be termed complex services. They require and deserve a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER VIII

### COMPLEX SERVICES

The ordinary twist service—How the reverse twist may be acquired—American services—Their actions and movements explained—Principles of the American swerve and break—Some truths expounded—The rotation of the ball and what it means—Why the American swerve sometimes fails to break in the proper way—A practical method of acquiring the ordinary and the reverse American services—General tactics for the server—Running-in on the service

**F**IRST let us take the *Ordinary twist service*. By hitting the ball on its right-hand side with a glancing blow, the racket being more or less perpendicular, the result is horizontal spin. This causes the ball to curl in the air out to the server's right and then in to his left hand. After touching the ground, the ball continues the same curve. The so-called break hardly exists, it is simply a continuance of the original curve, the only difference being that it is generally more pronounced than the curl in the air. If the ball is thrown up more to the right, more spin can be obtained. This service curls out of court when served into the right-hand half of the service area.

*The Chop service* is more of a half-arm stroke. The racket makes a downward glancing blow, from right to left, producing oblique under-spin. The ball hangs and is inclined to keep low.

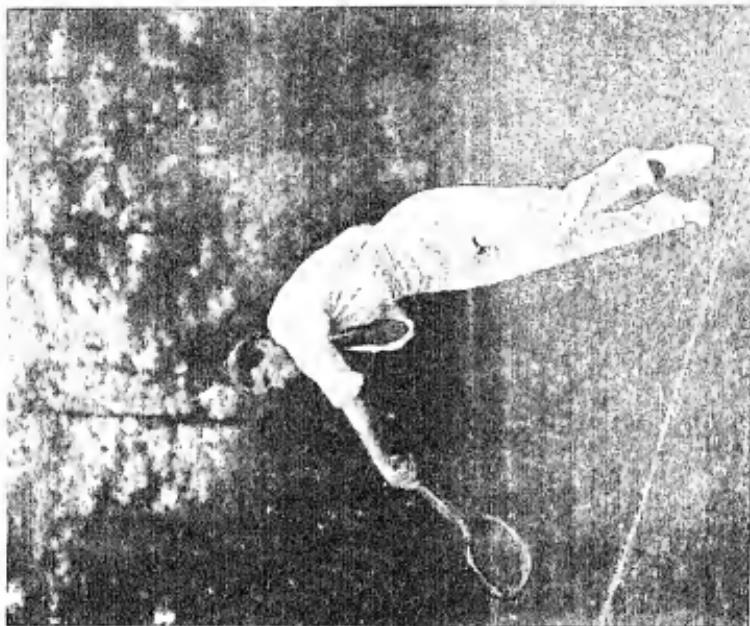


PLATE 16. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA): FINISH OF  
REVERSE TWIST SERVICE.

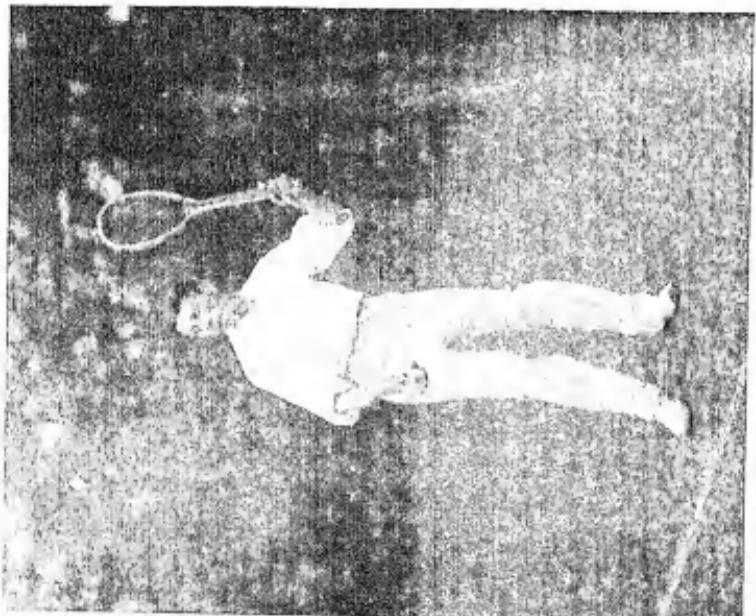


PLATE 16. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA): BEGINNING  
OF REVERSE TWIST SERVICE.



Underhand twists are sometimes employed as a change. The ball is hit with a glancing blow from right to left, the racket being almost horizontal and moving across the body at right angles to the ball. The ball curls out to the left and in to the right. The backhand service is the converse of this, being hit from left to right. Neither of these services is of much practical use.

*In the Reverse twist* (see Plates I. II. and III.) the racket glances across the ball from right to left. It is at a much lower level than the ordinary service, the arm must be bent. As the racket hits the ball it is more or less perpendicular. The ball spins on its axis to the left, and curves out to the left and in to the right, continuing this curve after hitting the ground. This service is useful from the backhand court, as it keeps low and bends out of court. It seems impossible, however, to play it very fast and the action is more fatiguing than in services made in the "ordinary" direction.

By bending the wrist back and therefore hitting downwards, the ordinary straight service may be made to keep low or on certain grounds to shoot. Under-spin causes this. The ball is not thrown high and should be in front of the server instead of to his right. When the ordinary service with a slight cut is made with the racket pointing to the left, so that the ball is hit on its left-hand side and the racket finishes to the right of the server, the result is in the direction of the American service. F. L. Riseley's service is of this nature.

Now we come to what are known as *the American services*. The action and movement of the arm and

racket, and the direction of propulsion are from the server's right to left or from left to right, the former being the "ordinary," and the latter the reverse, American. When first introduced into England a few years ago by Dwight Davis and Holcombe Ward, this service was a revelation. It is not any exaggeration to say that its introduction marked an epoch. To illustrate and explain the feelings experienced by those ignorant of its properties or meeting it for the first time, let us take the reverse variety of the ordinary, not American, service. A player would be familiar with its curve out to the server's left and in to his right, and with its so-called break, which continues that curve to the server's right. Supposing him to meet a reverse American, he sees it curl in the air in the familiar way, and is sure that its break will correspond, and will be to the server's right. But to his surprise, it breaks in the opposite direction, namely, to the server's *left*. Having prepared to hit the ball, perhaps back-handed, he is left helpless, as it passes across to his forehand. Conversely, the ordinary American curls out to the right of the server and in to his left, and breaks back, as it were, to his right. Thus it is usual and most natural, to serve the reverse variety from the right-hand and the ordinary from the left-hand court, the service in each case taking the striker outside the court. But here also variety is useful.

There seems to be no reason to question the term "American." Those who first made the service widely known, even if it had been worked out independently elsewhere, deserve the privilege of sponsorship. But here, as in the case of other

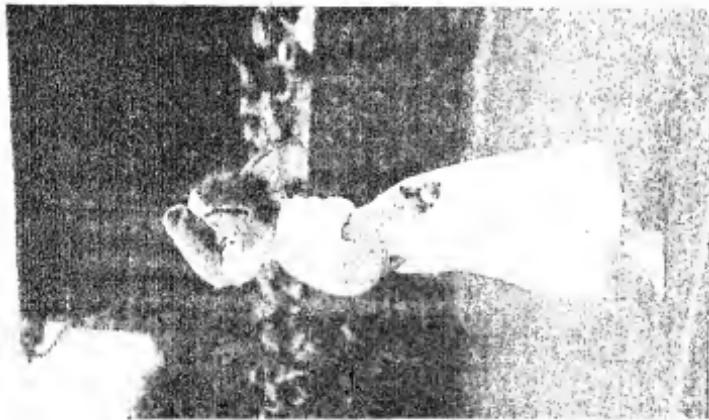
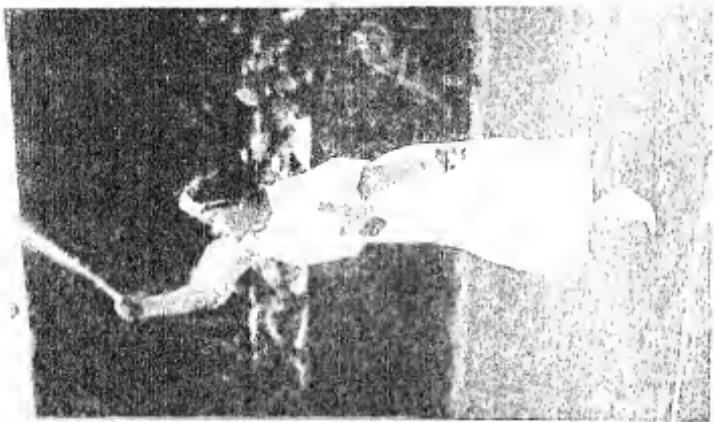
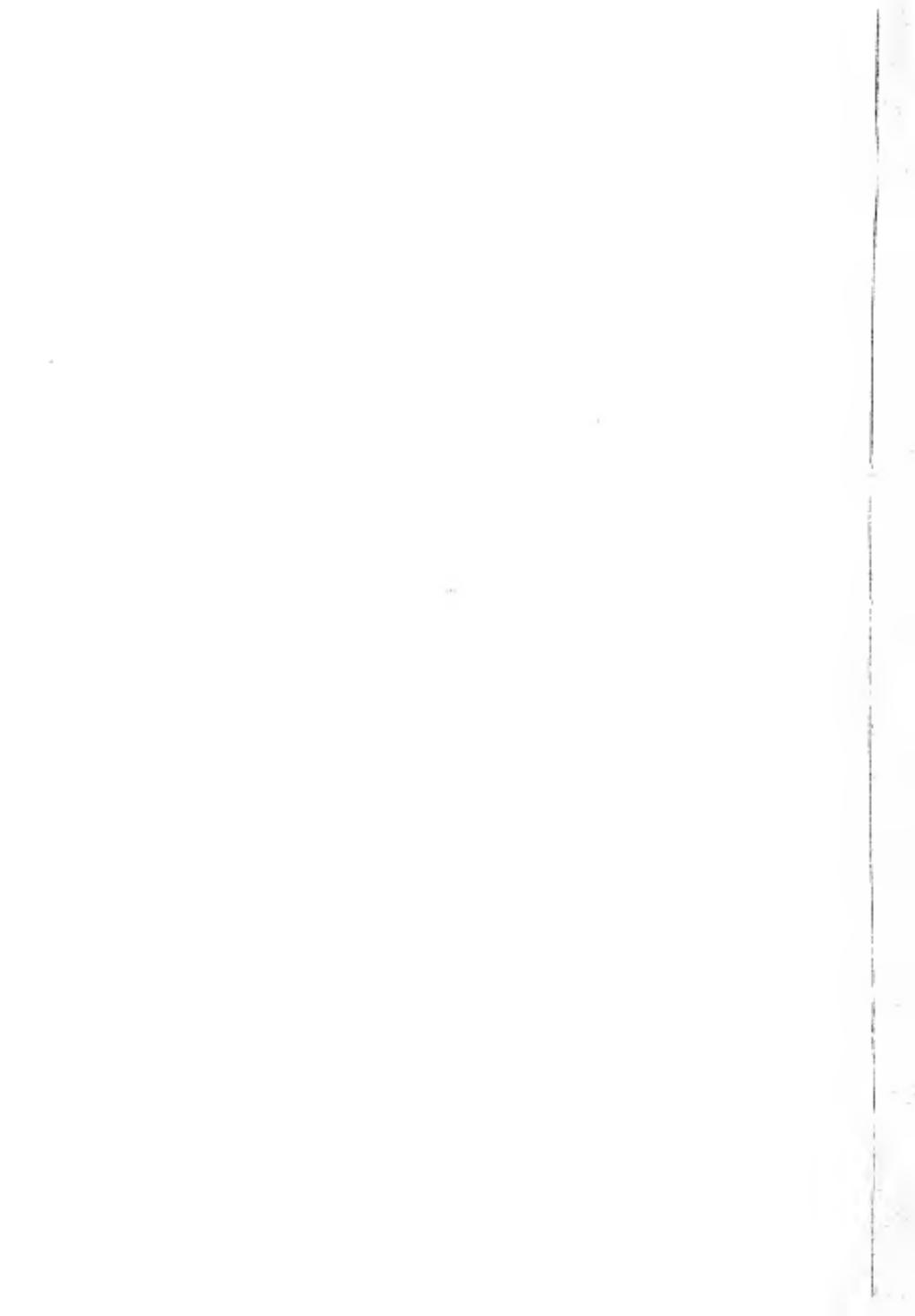


PLATE 4. MISS SUTTON (AMERICA): REVERSE TWIST SERVICE



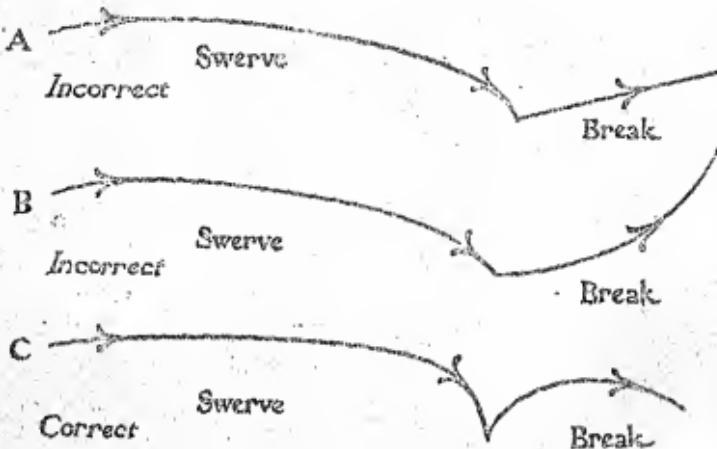
services, the term "ordinary" as applied to one direction of the curling service, is hardly appropriate, and though this form of the service is more widely used in England, America and the Colonies, the "reverse" form is no less popular on the Continent. "Right" and "left" might be suggested, inasmuch as in the "ordinary" service the ball curls out to the server's right and breaks to his right, while in the "reverse" the two movements are to the left.

In both forms of the American service the motion of the ball is the same, and is produced in the same way, but in the one the trajectory is bent over to the right and in the other to the left. As a great deal has been written on the "swerve," the break and the general peculiarities of this service, and there still seems to be some confusion as to what is actually done by the ball, what the swerve is and what the break is, it will be well to combine with our account of the method of executing the service some definitive explanation of its principles.

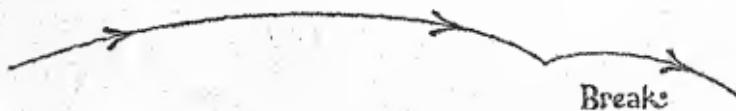
The beginner may be recommended when returning this service to wait until the ball is nearing its second bounce. By that time it will not only have lost most of its spin, but it will actually come back to him. The break, that is to say, is not straight nor does it curve in an opposite direction to the swerve; it is a repetition on a smaller scale of the curve of the ball in the air. It resembles figure C, not A or B.

To employ an analogy from figure-skating, the whole course of the ball from the racket to the second bounce is that of "three" or ordinary "turn," not that of a "rocker," straight or curved; the cusp

being the point of contact with the ground. The diagram shows how the ball comes back; that is, though the first half of the break is contrary to the second half of the swerve, and therefore unexpected by the novice, yet the second half returns to the



normal direction. The whole movement, again, is really one curve, broken by a cusp; theoretically, that is to say, there is no difference except of degree between this break and that of the ordinary cut service. The latter is of this shape:—



If this is emphasized, an American break is the result.

The next point in the explanation may be regarded as the first essential for practising the service. Let us take the ordinary form—the point to be grasped is that the method of striking the ball and therefore its subsequent behaviour, is identical

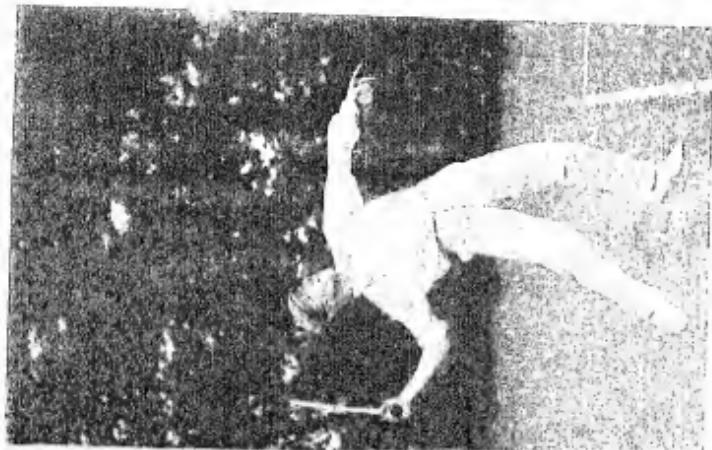
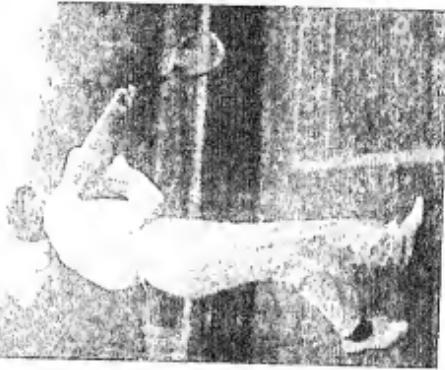
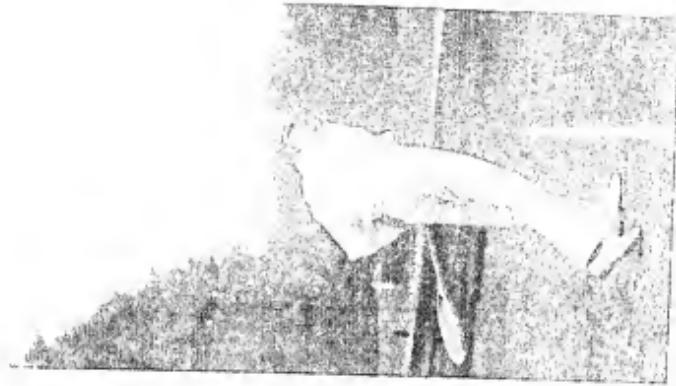


PLATE III. P. OF NORMAN (PELICAN): REVERSE, TWIST SERVICE



with that of the lifting-drive.<sup>1</sup> As before noticed, this is effected by hitting the ball with an upward blow, the course of the racket being almost perpendicular to the ground. A strong forward or over-spin is thus imparted to the ball. In order to get this top-spin, the ball must be hit at the bottom ; this rule applies also to the service. This is not in order that the ball may travel from one side of the racket to the other, for it is quite certain that not more than an inch of the gut touches the ball either in this stroke or the service. The player must hit the ball with the centre of the racket. He certainly is liable to feel as if the ball stayed longer on the gut in these strokes ; but what really happens is that by hitting the ball on its lower side he gets a better leverage for making it rotate. Consequently a very fair length of the ball's equator passes over that inch of gut. This lifting drive has a very high trajectory, an accentuated dive and rebound, the two latter movements being due to the fact that the rate of propulsion is decreasing, so that the spin can have more effect. The same is the case with the American services. From a bird's eye view the course of the ball in the lifting-drive is quite straight, but from a side view it is like this :—



If you take the plane of this drive and materialise it, and then bend it over to right or left at an angle of about forty-five degrees, it will be found identical in appearance and effect with the American service. The fact is that the American service is a lifting

<sup>1</sup> See page 82.

drive, played obliquely. The credit of expounding this truth belongs to Mr. P. A. Vaile. As he well puts it,<sup>1</sup> "the service really is the forehand lifting-drive, played as an overhead volley, but with flight and axis of rotation at an angle of, say, forty-five degrees, instead of the line of flight being at right angles to the ground and the axis of rotation horizontal." In order to bend the stroke thus, the ball in this service must be hit with a blow which is at the same angle. Thus for the ordinary American the racket moves upwards from SW to NE from SE to NW for the reverse. There must be no attempt to hit the ball on the top; it must be hit underneath.

If the curve in the air described by the American service is a "swerve," then the curve or high trajectory of the lifting-drive is not a "swerve." But why not? It bends in the air, whereas the other is due to the tilting of the trajectory. The term "swerve," though it has not much precision, does not seem to be used of either movements. However that may be, it is interesting to compare another sort of swerve. The swerve of a cricket ball is certainly produced, in most cases (for instance, by George Hirst) without rotation. Mr. L. T. Driffield makes a cricket ball swerve in the same way. He is inclined to believe, as Hirst believes, that it is due entirely to the seam and the pressure of the air thereon. The seam in front of the ball (being more or less in the direction of its flight), acts as a forward rudder would on a boat and the pressure of the air consequently deflects the ball from a straight path. The "swerve" of a base ball on the other hand is of the tennis type,

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Lawn Tennis.*

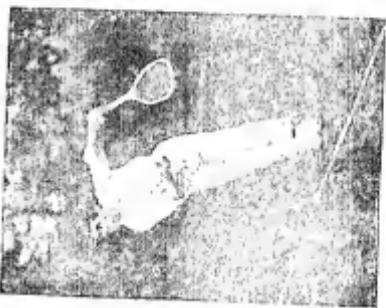
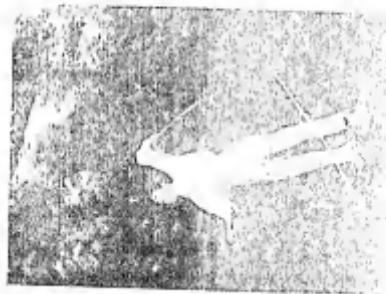
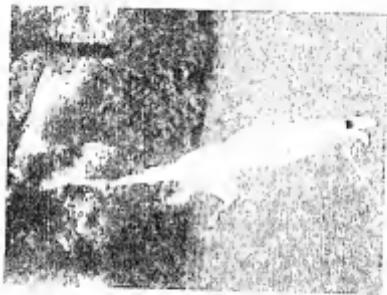
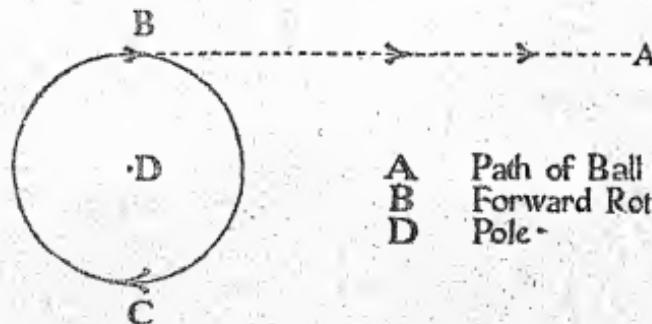


PLATE II: N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA): AMERICAN SERVICE



the ball, like the tennis ball, having no seam. The swerve is an appearance only; the path of the ball is straight but is seen at an angle. A golf ball when driven correctly resists the action of gravitation, owing to the fact that it has under-spin, and its curve is convex to the earth, the rotation making it rise. The curve made by the lifting-drive and the American service and by all twisting strokes in lawn tennis, is produced in the same manner as the curve of a golf ball. In those we are here concerned with, the curve is the other way towards the earth, but at an angle of forty-five degrees.

The apparent "swerve" has already been explained; we have now to consider the cause of the exaggerated curve up or down, which is due to the rotation of the ball on its axis. The explanation is already familiar. Take a ball flying through the air with forward or over or top-spin. For our purpose it has two motions (1) its translation, or movement of the whole ball from point to point in the air; (2) its rotation. One side of the ball is necessarily moving faster than the other; the side which is moving forward, in the same direction as the motion of the whole ball, is moving faster than the other side which is moving backwards, because the whole ball is moving forwards. Thus:—



A Path of Ball  
 B Forward Rotation  
 D Pole

The side B is moving faster than the side C. The same fact is well known in the case of the top of a carriage wheel in motion. Because the friction and pressure of the air is necessarily greater on the side which is moving faster, the ball, following the line of least resistance, yields to this pressure and therefore curves in the air. This explains the high trajectory, the quick rise and fall of the lifting drive and the American service. Bend the former to an angle of forty-five degrees, and the ball seems to swerve from one side to the other—the American “swerve.”

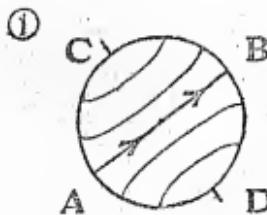
In the next place we have to consider the break. The bound has a similar trajectory to that described in the air. It is the bound of the lifting-drive but tilted over at an angle of forty-five degrees. Of course it is in the same plane as the curve in the air. The tilting produces, or rather *is* the break.

A final point perhaps requires to be cleared up. It has been argued by one writer that the break is in the opposite direction to what it ought to be. This of course is not the case, its direction is perfectly natural. This writer, judging from his diagram, which is like a “rocker,” has not observed that the curve of the break is out and in, and of the same shape as the “swerve” in the air. In order to account for this imagined irregularity he suggests that it is due to the axis of the ball having altered its inclination by the time it reaches the ground. On the analogy of the precession of the earth, which he quotes in illustration, the result could not take place in so short a time. Moreover that movement is only a sort of wobbling of the axis. But if the axis were

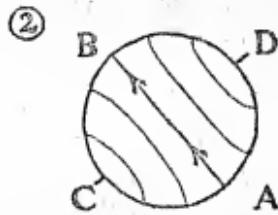
turned, as he thinks, the result would be the opposite of what he supposes.

In fact, everything depends for a successful break on the axis being put in the proper position and keeping it. This point is really of importance in the theory of the American service. It is a well known fact that in a rotating sphere the part which moves fastest is the equator. The motion decreases in speed on each parallel of latitude until the pole is reached, where theoretically there is no rotation at all. It is obvious then that the spin of a ball, the lifting-drive or American service, for instance, is most vigorous when the equator hits the ground. The top side then lurches forward, the under side receiving a check, at the utmost velocity.

The diagrams show the inclination of the axis produced by the plane in which the racket hits the ball (1) in the ordinary, (2) in the reverse service:—

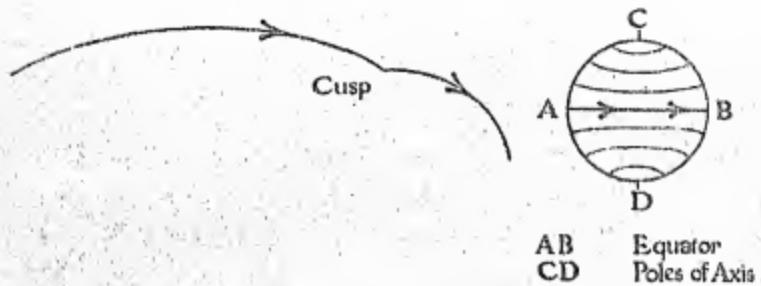


AB      Equator  
CD      Poles of Axis



They represent the ball as seen directly from behind and on the same level as the eye, both when struck and when hitting the ground. The lines stand for the equator and the path of the racket, and the arrows give the direction of the motion of the racket and con-

sequently of the spin. The reason why an American service sometimes fails to break in the proper way is that the ball has been struck at a wrong angle and therefore hits the ground on a parallel which is not near enough to the equator. The same explanation shows how the ordinary twisting service, as opposed to the American, breaks in the same direction as the previous curve. The horizontal spin makes the axis nearly perpendicular and the ball therefore hits the ground on or near its pole, where there is no motion. It skids there and continues its original curve. The cusp has no tangential curves.



As before remarked, there is no difference in principle between the ordinary break and the American; the latter is merely a better application of the same spin, at a better angle, so that the rotation is applied where it will do most good.

The curious change of shape of the ball during an American service has been often noticed. The shape assumed is not, however, as generally supposed, that of an egg. It is the shape of the earth or of an orange and is due to the fact that the poles of a rotating sphere tend to become flattened.

Returning to the practical side of the American





PLATE V. HOLCOMBE WARD (AMERICA): AMERICAN SERVICE

service and taking the "ordinary" first, it is suggested that as a commencement the player should attempt it in a small way. When the trick of hitting the ball an upward glancing blow from the left-hand under side to the right-hand upper side—the secret of the stroke—has been acquired, then the various movements may be lengthened. It is essential to throw the ball up well to the left of the head, and to the left of the head when bent to the left, and the server must bend his body to the left and backwards. His weight should be on the left leg. It is useful to have the head of the racket already hanging behind the head before the ball is thrown up, as is done by Ward. It is also useful both in this and the reverse to hold the racket a little short. Finger-work is of importance; if the racket is held rather loosely the player will feel the hand with his fingers at the end of the follow-through, an indication among others that the ball has been dealt with correctly. As in all services there must be an intelligent use of the feet; the ball of the foot must be made to assist the movement of the body by acting as a clutch or a pivot (see Plate V.). The latter remarks of course apply to the reverse service equally. In this the ball is hit from S.E. to N.W. (see Plate VII.). The body should be almost facing the net and the weight is most profitably distributed when most of it is on the right foot. The right foot, it will be seen, grips the ground. The weight swings over to the left during the follow-through. It is necessary to bend the body to the right and slightly backwards, and to throw the ball up to the right of the head. It is useful to bend the hand well back. This helps you to get under the ball. The

stroke is more wristy than that of the ordinary American, as it starts from a point away from the body where it is difficult to get swing and force. The wrist should be very loose, and the throwing action emphasized by a jerk of the wrist. To get swing, it is usual to make a down and up movement or flick as a preliminary. Hold the racket out at about the height of the wrist, with arm bent, then when the ball has been thrown up, drop the racket slightly and move it backwards and upwards; a pause to steady the stroke follows, and then the racket is as it were, flung at the ball. The racket finishes right across the body. As in the ordinary American and other services, a little practice will make it easy to time the first stride towards the net with the beginning of the follow-through. The Plates (IV. and VI.) representing Brookes executing these services illustrate this point to perfection.

If, in either service, there is a difficulty about getting the proper angle of the stroke and consequently the proper break, it means that you are hitting the ball too horizontally. In order to correct this and get oblique rotation, it is useful to try and make the stroke almost perpendicularly upwards. This of course is impossible to do actually, but the attempt will bring the racket to the proper angle.

A player who can serve with equal facility the ordinary service with spin, finishing the stroke to the right of the body, and the ordinary American, or the reverse service with spin, and the reverse American, can give his opponent some trouble by changing from one to the other, the members of each pair having a very similar action. In the photographs of Brookes

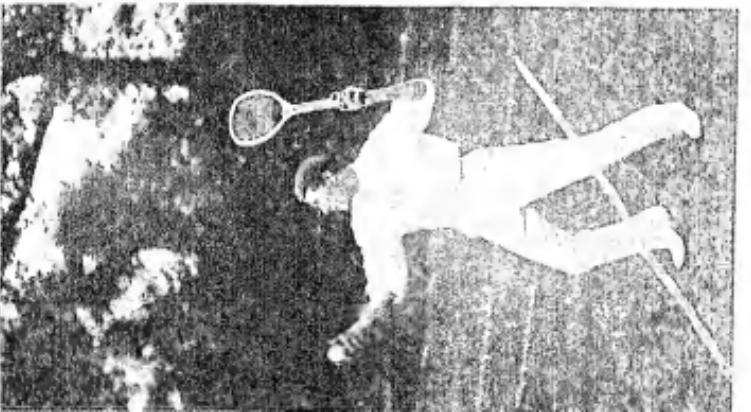
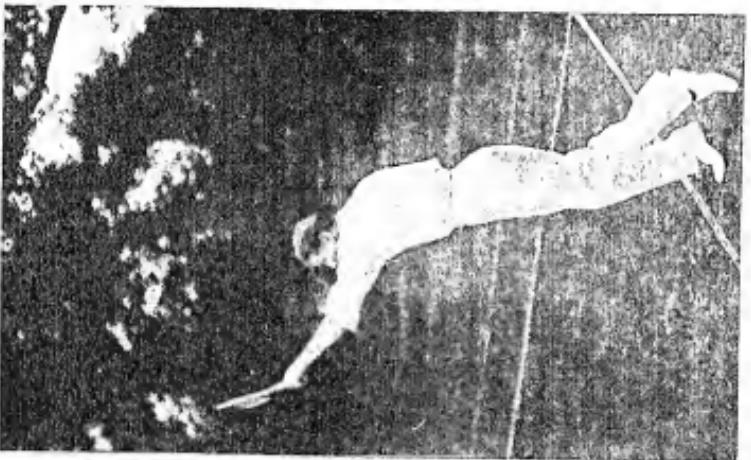
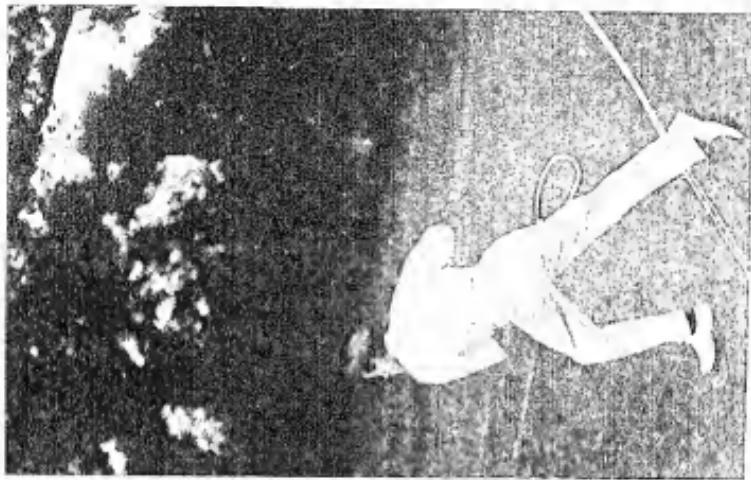


PLATE 17. N. E. BROOKES (AUSTRALIA): REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE



H. A. PARKER (NEW ZEALAND): REVERSE AMERICAN SERVICE

it will be seen how difficult it is to distinguish one service from the other.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to general tactics on the part of the server in a single, it has been pointed out already that to serve from the extreme corners is not much use. In particular, though a slow service with drag might give the server extra time to get up to the net, yet the extra distance discounts the advantage of time. More serious still is the chance that a service which takes the striker-out too far out of court may enable him to pass the server clean, placing the ball, as it were, round the corner. When the server runs in on his service, as he certainly should do if there is anything in it, variety of placing with the centre of the service-line as a staple gives him most chance of intercepting the return; against a good driver it is dangerous to serve into the forehand half of the backhand court.

In a double, when the server is serving from near the corner his partner should get nearer the side-line; when he is serving from near the centre, the partner should move proportionately closer to the centre. It may be of use to some temperaments to watch one's partner as he serves, turning round as the ball starts on its flight. The habit has at least this in its favour, that it carries out the golden rule of lawn tennis—never take your eyes off the ball.

<sup>1</sup> In studying the Plates illustrating the various services of Mr. Brookes, the reader will, of course, bear in mind that the champion is a left-handed player. The suggestions offered in the text have reference to a *right-handed* player.

## CHAPTER IX

### MATCH PLAY IN GENERAL

Preliminaries—Winning the Toss—Points which ought to be considered—Where the striker-out should stand—The return of the service—Place rather than pace—Dealing with the man who runs in—The use and abuse of the lob—The favourite area of the hard driver—Short and soft shots—Inadequate care over easy returns—The need for a permanent base—Forbidden ground for the volleyer—Handicap singles—Advice to the giver and receiver of odds—Pluck indispensable—Turning the tables at the eleventh hour—“Win when you can”—Recoveries that end in defeat—Will-power on court—“Don’t abuse the ball-boy!”

**H**AVING discussed more or less exhaustively the various strokes in the game and suggested the methods of their execution, one may turn to match play—the department of direct antagonism, where blow is returned for blow and tactics and generalship are factors of prime importance.

Before the match is actually set in motion there comes the preliminary function of “tossing” for the honour, by which is not only meant choice of courts, as some players believe, but also the question as to whether you or your opponent is to begin the service. Now this is a matter of more than passing importance. The service is the first blow to be struck; its possession, where players of equal calibre are con-

cerned, may bear a direct influence on the result, and in a protracted struggle a service in hand at the opening of a new set may prove the decisive factor. Speaking generally, the possession of the opening service in doubles is of considerable value and in nine cases out of ten the winner of the toss snatches at this advantage with avidity, ignoring altogether the question of side. But in a single the circumstances are different and unless the winner of the toss has a particularly effective service which (taking the class of his opponent into account) he feels fairly confident will yield him the first game, it may prove more advantageous to confine the option to the court in which to begin operations. The wind, the sun, a possible slope of the court and the character of the background have all to be taken into account. If a strong wind is blowing down the court, its presence, especially if you are a base-liner, will naturally influence your decision; a vain effort to return a screw service against the wind may ruffle your temper to such a degree that your chances of success are imperilled at the start. Wind, if previously studied, will prove a weapon of great utility—and neglect to gauge its direction before play begins may often cause unexpected disaster. When it is blowing across the court its presence can be utilised with great effect in serving a ball that is intended to bound out of court or again when lobbing. The position of the sun should, of course, be instinctively observed, for if it be shining down the court, the player who gets it at his back has an incalculable advantage, especially if his opponent be a volleyer with a preference for high smashes. As the possession of courts is reversed

after the first game, and again after the third, the wise man elects to be handicapped by the sun for the first game and to inflict its rays upon his opponent for the next two. Thereby (if he is confining his attention to choice of courts) he also ensures that his first service shall be delivered from the "sunless" side. As to the slope of the court (if there be any) it is clear that a ball played downhill will have more pace on it after it leaves the ground. It is useful to keep this fact in mind. I think I have said enough to show that a favourable verdict from the spin of the racket or the coin is a "gift from the gods" which ought to be thoughtfully received.

The question as to where the striker-out should stand to receive the service depends mainly on its quality and anticipated direction—anticipated that is, so far as previous experience of the server's deliveries affords a clue. If one is waiting to receive a lightning service, like that of F. L. Rouseley, it would be hopeless to stand in court at all; the player must get beyond the base-line. But for a service not absolutely dynamic, especially for one that draws its efficiency from placing, the striker-out can come nearer in, always remembering that if his opponent is trying to make him move out to the sides as is very likely, and is inevitable where break services are concerned, a foot or two's reserve space in front may be of great value. For while it is always possible to go forward, it is next to impossible to go back. The condition of the court will also be a factor determining the best position. On a wet court the bound of the ball is naturally slower, as it is shorter, and the striker-out will perhaps be able to stand as much as a yard

nearer the net than he would on a dry court. Players on the covered courts where the surface is uniformly fast necessarily stand farther back.

The return of the service, speaking generally, is the most important stroke in the match; it is the key to the rally. The quality of the service apart, players are apt to break down more frequently over the reply to the frontal attack than at any other point of the game. Even first-class exponents are guilty in this respect. Just as a golfer finds, apparently without reason, that he is invariably topping the ball at the tee, so the man in court is visited with a mysterious affliction that prevents his first shot of all finding the desired target. For days together the weakness remains, sapping confidence and exercising an effect on his whole play. Then suddenly the stroke is recovered, the ball is once more under control. I am inclined to think that one reason for this temporary failing, so far as the majority of sufferers is concerned, is the tendency, so difficult to overcome, to score outright with the first return. The short, dramatic rally makes an irresistible appeal to many players; the desire to win the ace with the least possible delay becomes a habit. The pace is always being forced, brilliancy is sacrificed to tactics. Baddeley is right when he says it is easier and less risky to go for a stroke off the second or third return than off the first; and the more one studies the methods of first-class players the more is one convinced that *place* rather than pace is the secret for the return of the service.

Indeed the injunction "never press" may be applied to lawn tennis, as to golf. The hard hitting

of the expert is natural to him, and comes last in a player's progress to excellence. The same is true of every game; and there is no worse fault in a beginner than attempting to hit hard. As he improves in the other essentials of the stroke and becomes more accurate, he will find that unconsciously his drives become harder. Force, one repeats, comes last and it must be allowed to come at its proper time.

In dealing with the man who runs in on his service try not to let this hustling manner of attack bother you. "If his service is very severe," points out Mr. Meers, "he won't have time to get very far in (unless the umpire allows him to foot-fault, which unfortunately he often does) and under these circumstances he is sure to miss a good many of your returns. If not a hard service, it should not be difficult to place the ball on one side or the other of him. If the service should be a high-bounding ball the best way is to force it, with some strength, either across the court or down the side-lines." But some alert volleyers seem, at any rate to the inexperienced, to leave no loophole at all. Before the service has apparently come over the net they have followed it and are waiting, eagerly and confidently, to devour the return. Unless he hits with some force the conscience of the striker-out tells him that the next stroke of his opponent will win the ace; if he does hit with force he puts a premium on accuracy: the ball may either go beyond the side-line or sail aimlessly away over the head of the advancing volleyer—a "mile out of court."

An alternative stroke is the lob, but any lob that

does not pitch on or near the base-line and is not high enough to pass out of the reach of the volleyer is futile. A lob which is too short deserves to be, and doubtless will be, killed outright. One form of lob may be said to depend on height; the other just passes out of reach of the opponents' racket and is naturally faster than the first. A lob into the back-hand corner is perhaps the most useful, but it must be remembered that a lob is really easier to volley when on the backhand side of the court, and a short one can be easily killed across. The player may be recommended to vary the placing of his lobs; a fast lob into the forehand corner is as difficult to deal with as any. In snapping up a ball nearly out of reach some cut may be used, but as a rule the application of cut to a lob (except where wind is concerned) is to be deprecated. It has no positive advantage and may interfere with placing. Practically speaking, the lob is a defensive stroke made to extricate the player from an embarrassing situation, and by some men it is employed with compunction. But the art of sound lobbing, provided it be not carried to excess and become a practice difficult to restrain, is certainly worth cultivating if only for the variety it offers. Most of the best American players are adroit at tossing; some of them use the lob systematically when opposed to hustling volleyers and from it they obtain much relief and time to regain an attacking position. Nevertheless persistent lobbing must be regarded as a confession of weakness.

Coming now to the actual rally or rest, its length must naturally depend upon the class of attack formulated by both combatants. A confirmed base-

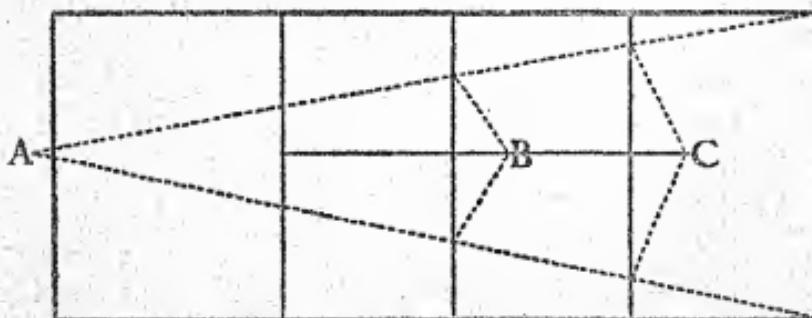
liner will naturally employ different methods to gain the desired end, the winning of the ace, than the habitual volleyer, while the all-round player adopts a combination of both. Mr. Meers thinks that if the base-liner be really good and his returns of low trajectory there will be little volleying. This is doubtless true except when the base-liner is required to deal with services and overhead volleying such as Norman Brookes commands, in which case the back-court man, however adroit he may be, will not be able to control his drives with the same certainty. Even S. H. Smith, who has been so successful against the best American volleyers, has found the close-quarter attack of Brookes extremely difficult to penetrate, while Gore, another severe base-liner, has fared worse. The case of the present champion may be extreme, but it has served to cast doubt on the theory that volleying against first-class base-line play should only be employed to kill a weak return or should follow a return that is calculated to embarrass the base-liner. For example, assume the man at the back of the court makes a quick return from a position near one of the corners. If you drive a hard ball down the centre and then discreetly advance the chances are that he either lobs (in which case your position would not be weakened) or presents you a return with which your position at the net should allow you to effectively deal. But it is worth remembering that the favourite area of a hard driver is between the centre and backhand line of the back half of the court. This is the place from which his most deadly drives proceed. To run up therefore when you

have put the ball into this area, however well placed down the centre your stroke may be, is to court disaster. Similarly, if you possess a hard drive, more can be done by directing it into the corners or into the forehand court than by going for the centre or the backhand side of the centre. Pressing a hard driver on his forehand often leads to a kill across court. He may also be treated to a number of short and soft shots. The short ones are difficult to return over the net at any speed, and the slow ones are troublesome by reason of the change of pace.

When Ernest Renshaw was once asked by an aspiring youth for the secret of success at lawn tennis, he gave the laconic answer, "Learn to get the ball over the net"; and the hint is not so simple as it sounds. One might perhaps add a rider and say "into the court as well." Many a player endowed with a greater variety of strokes than his opponent beats himself by neglecting this elementary principle. Either he does so by not taking adequate care with his easy shots or by taking too great a risk with his difficult ones. Where two base-liners are concerned it generally happens that the man who makes up his mind to hit hard at everything loses the match; it is the man who knows when to let out, and more essential, when to restrain his ardour, that has the better of the engagement. In short, patience is a virtue in the lawn tennis court, as elsewhere. The man who waits quietly for his adversary's pyrotechnic display to fizzle out seldom has to wait in vain.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of fixing on a permanent base from which the attack-

ing operations can be conducted and to which the player returns after some manoeuvre on the part of his opponent has drawn him from this position. Roughly speaking, this base for the back-court player is situated just behind the base-line; for the volleyer about a yard behind the net. Some players fix the volleying base farther back, but its *limit* should be midway between the service-line and the net. The "forbidden ground" for the volleyer is between the service-line and the base-line. The reasons are concisely given by Wilfred Baddeley, perhaps the best general there ever was. Primarily, he points out, it is very much easier to effectively volley a ball that is ascending or travelling horizontally, as is the case when it is passing over the net, than one which, having passed the service-line, is descending. Secondly, the player has less space to guard, relatively, when he is up at the net than when he is farther back in the court. The following diagram employed by Mr. Baddeley explains this argument:—



A is the base-liner driving his returns from the back of the court. B is the volleyer in the right position; C the volleyer in the wrong position. It

is obvious that B has to cover less ground than C in order to reach the ball. Of course there are occasions when volleying in the back zone can be carried out with beneficial results and a good overhead volleyer, such as H. L. Doherty dealing with short lobs, can be deadly in this region. But as a general principle the section of court between the service-line and the base-line must never be regarded as a residence. It is "the place to lose from."

In a handicap single it behoves the giver of points to exercise more care than usual with all his shots. In theory, he will use his head more than his hand. He will make every effort to win a point outright from his first service, not only because of its face value but because of the demoralising effect a "clean ace" always has on a weak opponent. The back-marker, however heavily penalised he may feel, should never regard the loss of the first set as conclusive evidence that he cannot win. A change of tactics, the nature of which is indicated by the penetrable points in his adversary's armour, may often produce unexpected results and disconcert the enemy at a period when he is inclined to slacken his efforts. The advice so often tendered to the receiver of long odds "to let himself go" is sound in so far as it counsels him not to play "pat-ball" and shy at a stroke which involves some risk. But a blind and reckless hitter is just the kind of prey an "owe-30" man is out to devour. It will not take him long to discover the kind of decoy that will deliver the "plus 15.3" man into his clutches; by feeding him with balls that are invariably bashed out of court the result of the match

will only be a matter of time. The receiver of points, especially if he has his back to the sun, will find the lob a most effective weapon, but now, as always, he must toss high or nothing will save him, not even the sun. As a general rule he should employ the volley as often as possible. The back-marker will in nine cases out of ten get the better of a base-line rally; moreover, the chance of surprising him with a short-cross volley should ever be present in the weaker man's mind. The more he volleys the less the giver of odds will like it: of that I am sure. Of course he should choose his time when to run it. To do so on a weak service or a short-length hopping drive is to present his adversary with an ace.

It goes without saying that the player who wins the toss in a handicap match should be particularly careful to ascertain where the odds fall before the match begins. A man who gives three-sixths of fifteen, which means a stroke to his opponent in every *even* game, will naturally elect *not* to serve in the first game, reserving any advantage he may possess in this respect for the second game, when he will have leeway to make up. So with the receiver of odds, he will take care that his service falls in those games (or as many of them as his odds allow) in which he is *least* favoured by the handicapper. Wind and sun, themselves extra penalties, must also not escape attention in this connexion.

Need I add that one of the chief elements of success in match play is courage? A contest is never so short that the issue cannot fluctuate; the tables may be turned even in what appears to be

the last game of all. Some men (H. S. Barlow was one) rarely produce their best form until the other men secure a long lead and the necessity for adjusting the balance is very real. This is not a sound principle to adopt—win while you can and as soon as you can should be the golden maxim—but the fact that it is followed and often with success shows what determination can achieve under certain circumstances. It is always well to remember, even when disaster may appear imminent, that some untoward incident may occur which will destroy your opponent's nerve and deliver him into your hands. There is the historic match at Wimbledon when Ernest Renshaw, with Lawford five games to two in the fifth set, began serving slow under-hand screws—a dying kick as it were. The cross wind blew those breaks right out of court; Lawford attempted to take them forehanded, failed and (the players changing sides every game as was the custom in those days) allowed Renshaw to catch him at the post and win.

And if you have made a fine recovery after being hopelessly in arrears, be particularly careful not to relax your efforts when you have caught your adversary. Say he is five-two in the final set. You make a great effort (possibly he is slacking off, feeling he has the plum in his mouth) and manage to win the next three games. Honours are now easy and you breathe again. But just as you are congratulating yourself on the prospect of a brilliant victory, your opponent makes a final spurt, and finding you unresponsive—you have slightly relaxed the tension in surviving the crisis—wins in spite of

your rally. This often happens. Therefore I say, do not ease off in the slightest when the umpire calls "five all." Win that eleventh game by hook or by crook—in eight cases out of ten it will decide the match. Your adversary will see you mean business and his resistance will probably flicker out in the twelfth game.

Finally, there is the need for a calm demeanour. "Yes," I have heard critics say of more than one fine player; "he would have been champion of England but for his temper." Some players are endowed by Providence with what is known as a match-winning temperament. It is a great asset, worth many an American service or hurricane drive; and I believe it can be cultivated by the exercise of will-power and a preordained resolution not to be upset by trifles. Umpires have a habit at crucial periods of giving wrong decisions—or decisions that appear to you to be wrong, which is the same thing from the psychological standpoint—and it requires a very strong mind to keep the temper under control. But practice in this, as in all respects, will effect the desired end and very soon, almost unconsciously, the player will be able to assume, even if he does not actually feel, indifference to such passing worries. Another disturbing factor may be a temporary halt in the hostilities called through the action of some spectator, through a change of umpires, or possibly through your opponent wishing to change his shoe. Be as cheerful as you can during the delay, put your coat on if you think you are liable to catch cold and on no account (unless you want to lose the next game) use violent language.

Another injunction: Don't abuse the ball-boy! He may be guilty of every possible misdemeanour, even the heinous offence of pricking the balls with a pin; but in nine cases out of ten it pays you better in the end to overlook his faults, at any rate until the match is over. Then, if you have won you will give him your sweetest smile.

## CHAPTER X

### DOUBLES AND MIXED DOUBLES

Spectacular virtues of a good double—Why the general standard of play is not higher—The physical and mental affinity of twins—Systematized formation essential—The primary instinct of both players—Where the server's partner should stand—The server's advance—A sinister shot—Clearing the feet—Employing the half-volley—The return of the service—The lob as a weapon of defence and attack—The return of the lob—Studying the trigonometry of the court—An alternative to the hard smash—Evolution of mixed doubles not complete—The advance of the lady volleyer—A field for strategy and “bluff”—Some hints to the man at the net—An important service game to win

**I**N the previous chapter the remarks applied more especially to the single game. The double game has independent features. The campaign requires distinctive methods. Two minds as well as two hands are employed; there is both a division of labour and a combination of forces.

When lawn tennis was first introduced the double was scarcely exploited at all and for some time its importance was subordinated to that of the single. Indeed, it is only within the last few years that its possibilities, both as regards strokes and tactics, have been comprehensively realised and an exposition of its higher qualities presented by experts. To Americans must in some measure be given the credit for developing its latent qualities. By com-

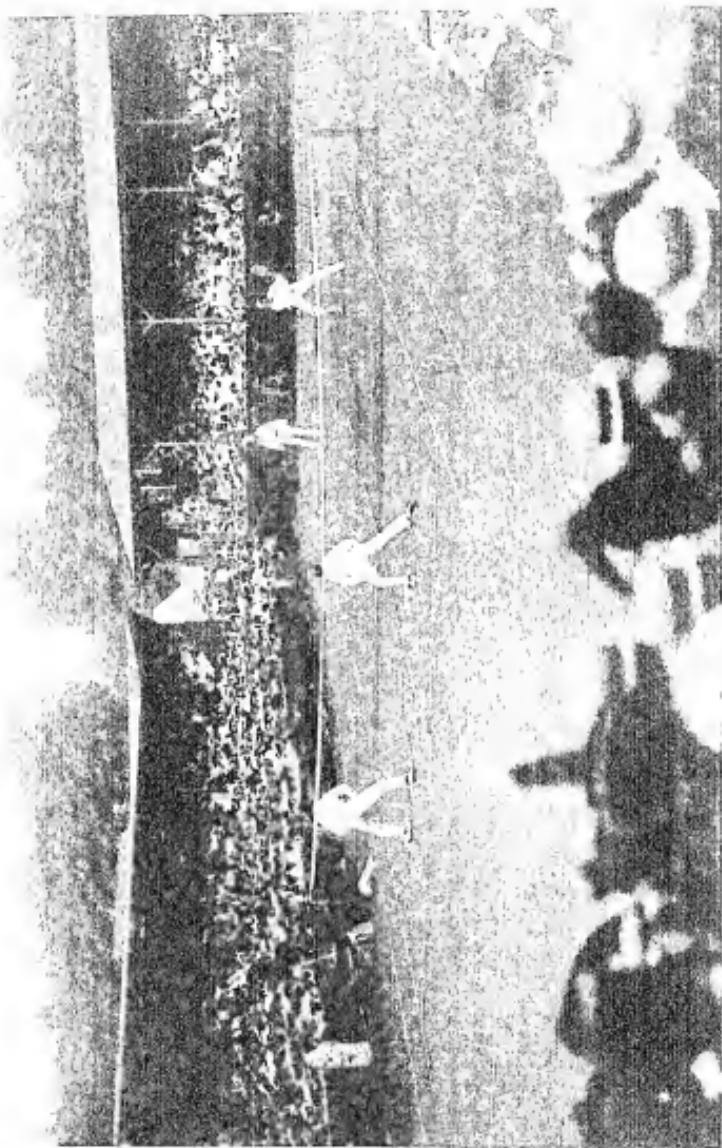
bining break services with sustained close-quarter attack, in which the short, sharp volley is so powerful a weapon, they have raised the first-class double to the highest spectacular level and invested it with a fascination it never previously possessed. It is true the best American pairs have not quite succeeded in overcoming the best pair in this country; but the margin has been so small as to be inconclusive. My impression is it would have disappeared altogether if the Doherty brothers had not, as a result of their two American visits, strengthened their game by absorbing some of the transatlantic ideas.

Any tournament committee will readily admit the superior attractiveness of a first-class double; if it is organising an exhibition match to focus the interest of the "gallery" the character of the "extra turn" is never in doubt. A protracted duel between two hard-hitting base-liners can be exciting enough, but it provides few of the exhilarating features of a four-handed contest. In a long single there are bound to be intermediary periods when both men, consciously or unconsciously, slacken their energies and display indifferent form. But a high-class double where four men of superlative skill are concerned never becomes wearisome to watch; it arrests and holds attention from the first serve to the last. Since it is built up on volleying, the pace is faster and the rests shorter. Essentially must there be more variety of stroke, more hard hitting as well as more finesse; and it is just this diversity of attack, this spontaneity of action, that appeal to popular fancy. "To watch a combined plan of attack developing, to notice the different ideas each player has of what will

best conduce to the common end and their separate ways of getting out of a difficulty or securing a stroke just at the right moment, to see the ball whizzing to and fro in the short space which divides four men all close to the net—these things give the double game a kind of excitement which to my mind," reflects Mr. Wilberforce, "is lacking in the single game."

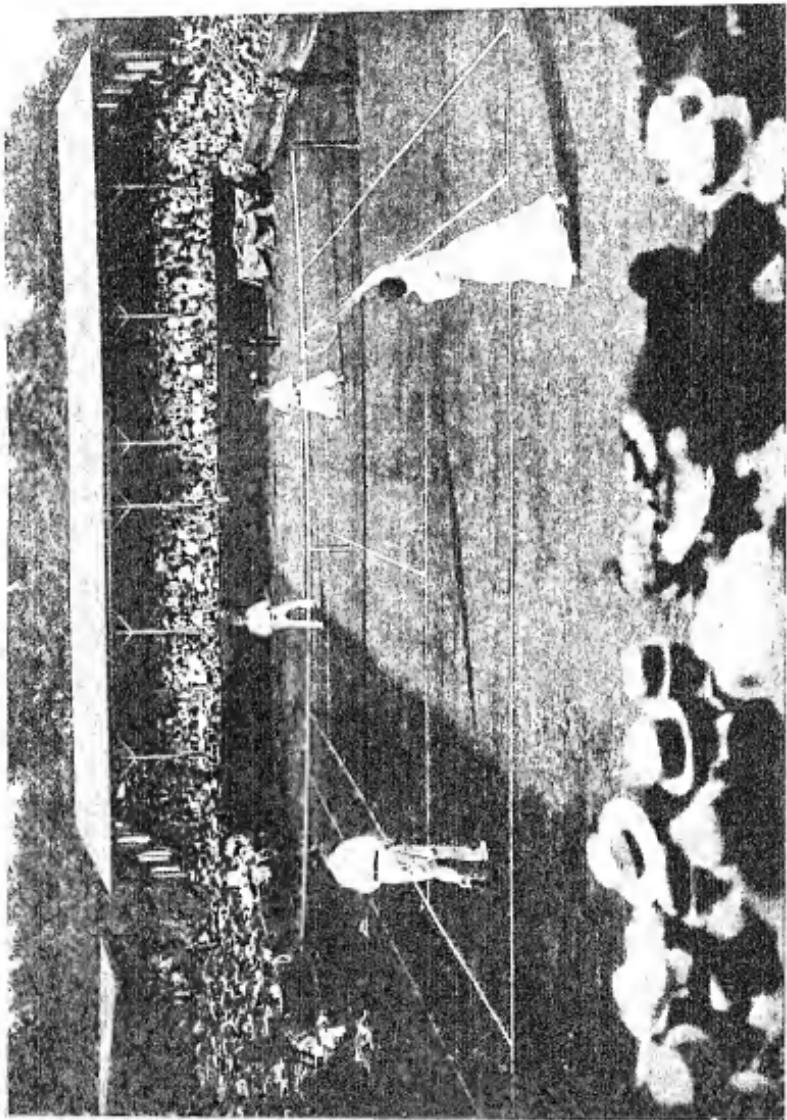
The claims of stamina not being so heavy, it follows that the double makes a wider appeal to players generally than the single. A man may preserve his place and power as a doubles exponent even when advancing years demand that he should relinquish the single, where the necessity for speed and mobility is paramount. On the other hand younger players, whose physical resources are not impaired, will frankly declare their preference for a double—a fact to which the subordination of the single at the universities and again at many clubs testifies.

In view of its popularity and perennial pursuit it is a matter for comment that the standard of double play has not reached a higher level. Unquestionably this is mainly due to lack of combination and mutual understanding between the parties concerned. The prevalent custom at most clubs in this country is for the members to "pair up" irrespective of style and temperament and for each couple to seek salvation in spite of any previous association on court or any practical knowledge of individual capacity. The result, more often than not, is a lamentable display of incompatibility and a general lowering of the standard all round. Even two brilliant single players when united on an unfamiliar footing are liable to suffer inglorious defeat at the hands of a pair individually



WIMBLEDON. 1886: THE DOHERTY'S 7; S. H. SMITH AND F. L. RISLEY





MIXED DOUBLES AT VINEELAND: MISS SUTTON AS A VOLLEYER



much weaker, but possessing that community of interests and sympathetic action which experience has cultivated and by which alone good fortune can be achieved. How true this is the success attending the efforts of brothers when playing together demonstrates. It is even more conclusively proved in the case of twins, where physical and mental affinity is the prime factor in their prosperity. One of the chief reasons why so many poor double matches are witnessed at open tournaments is the predominating presence of "scratch pairs"—hastily formed teams whose merits the referee is expected to gauge when handicapping. It sometimes happens that two left-court or two right-court players find themselves involuntarily thrown together—a handicap that the referee, beset by other manifold considerations, cannot perhaps be expected to appreciate. But the result of such coalition is often painfully exhibited. Of course if a competitor goes partnerless to a tournament he must take his chances; he may draw a blank or he may draw a prize. I shall never forget on one occasion being furnished with a partner who said to me before we lost our first round, "I think I ought to tell you I haven't played tennis for ten years and then it was in the garden with the children."

A systematized formation is undoubtedly one of the secrets of success in double play. Unless the limits of the operating area for each partner are defined, any plan of campaign must inevitably fail. This does not necessarily mean that each player's "sphere of influence" throughout the match is to be of equal dimensions but it does mean that the shooting shall be restricted to boundaries mutually

understood. Nothing is more likely to bring about early defeat than unwarranted intrusion ; it affords openings which opponents will quickly seize and is bound to upset the *morale* of the side. To get one or other of the players out of position is the aim of tactical enterprise in doubles ; a foolish excursion into your partner's court is only helping the other side.

As volleying is the Alpha and Omega of the double game, the primary instinct of both players must be to assume an attacking position at the net. The sooner both can rank themselves in parallel formation within three or four feet of the net, which is the most advantageous volleying line, the greater chance have they of bringing the rest to a successful issue. It follows, then, that the server's partner should make use of his liberty of movement and take up his position at once within the prescribed area. As a rule he should stand nearer the side-line than the centre-line. Not only will he thus give the server a clearer view of his objective, which is generally<sup>1</sup> his own secret up to the last minute, but he will be the better able to guard his own side-line. If the server serves from the corner of his court, it is more essential still that the partner should have his side-line well protected because the oblique direction of the service will probably take the receiver well out to the left of the man at the net and the former will probably essay a clean pass if he sees the slightest opening. Conversely, if the server, standing near the centre of the base-line, serves down the centre-

<sup>1</sup> The server's partner, like the wicket-keeper, will often be the better judge of the "bowling" and may suggest variations in direction to the server.

line the server's partner may expect the return to be nearer the centre of the net and consequently, while still guarding his side-line for eventualities, he will be prepared to move in towards the centre. The direction of the striker-out's return will often decide the issue of the rest either one way or the other (more often it may be said in favour of the server's side) and it is vitally important that the server's partner should not be outmanoeuvred at the start. If he gets a ball down his side-line low enough to be within reach the chances favour a winning shot; he can command a cross-volley which the partner of the striker-out will find extremely difficult to handle. But nothing can save his side if he gets too near the centre and is passed; whereas if he errs the other way there is always the possibility of the server intercepting the return.

The server should, of course, follow his service to the net and assume the parallel formation already advised. He will run up the instant the ball leaves his racket, but he must be careful not to make his passage a "headlong flight" because proper balance at this stage is everything and excessive speed may well upset his poise for the return which with good confidence he may expect to come in his direction. He will certainly have to deal with all returns that come across the court and the majority of those that come down the centre. He will do well to anticipate the short cross return that drops in the "tram-lines" within a few feet of the net. It is a favourite and sinister shot of several players and is a most effective return. Either it scores outright, the server having come up at such a pace and in such direction that he

cannot divert his course to intercept it, or it tends to draw the server's partner anxiously in the direction of the ball, in which case, should the server succeed in making a return, the opponents have a ready opening. Though the server should aim at gaining a position at the net from whence he can *volley down*, this being the essential quality of every scoring volley, it often happens that the return catches him at or near his feet. This is a target at which the striker-out purposely aims and unless the server is a particularly adroit low volleyer, like H. L. Doherty, Beals Wright or W. V. Eaves, he may congratulate himself if he makes a useful return. The striker-out's partner and the striker-out himself will both have advanced on the latter's return; given a soft ball, either will instantly smother it.

The lob-volley is such a difficult stroke to execute at all times that its application here, though pertinent to the situation, is rarely likely to succeed and a bad lob-volley would suffer the fate of all immature lobs. The best hope the server has in "clearing his feet" is a low back-hand volley to the forehand of the striker-out. I am referring now to the server running up from his right-hand court. The majority of players are weaker in volleying on their extreme forehand, than on their extreme backhand, and if the server can succeed in "stretching" the striker-out to the full reach of his racket he may get a weak return or, better still, he may pass him. The half-volley is both a pretty and a useful stroke in a sudden emergency of this kind and when performed with the delicacy and deftness of a player like Holcombe Ward, who invests it with a break, will sometimes

nonplus both opponents. But the perfect accomplishment of such a guard—for it can only be regarded as a guard—requires long practice and experience; except by the expert its attempt generally ends in the loss of the ace.

The responsibility attaching to the receiver of the service has already been mentioned. His reply to the service is of vital importance and beginners will do well to study this aspect of the double game with the greatest care. The nature of the striker-out's return will of course be governed materially by the direction of the service, and in a lesser degree by the position assumed by the server's partner, of whose preliminary movements he will have taken stock. There are only four feasible returns to the service—the drive down the centre-line, the drive down the side-line, the low drive across the court and the lob. The efficacy of the drive across the court, especially the one which drops the ball on or near the side-line and within a few feet of the net, has been noted. It is a favourite return off a slow second service and when neatly timed and directed may be accounted a winning ace. It can be made both from the back-hand and the forehand court with equal effect; the lower it passes over the net, of course, the better. The drive down the centre is the most common return of all; it is the most convenient as well as the safest return. Its popularity is such that the server generally regulates his movements accordingly—an adequate reason why it should not be employed too often. Variation in the return of the service, as in the service itself, should be assiduously practised. The best doubles players judiciously mix their returns.

It is the only way to keep the opponents in a state of suspense and force them to reveal their weaknesses.

The lob, as we have seen in previous chapters, is a most valuable weapon in match play and in modern doubles the ability to use the high toss effectively must be regarded as indispensable. The Americans, Holcombe Ward in particular, have developed the art of lobbing into a cult and though the Dohertys and S. H. Smith on this side of the Atlantic are masters in the execution of this stroke, English players, as a body, are inferior "lobbers" to the players in the States. Considered as a return to the service, the lob must only be an alternative stroke; to use it too frequently in this connexion is to impair that variety of return so essential if the opponents are not to be allowed to systematize their attack. Following a successful side-line pass or a cross-drive that scores by sheer speed alone, a lob may be effectively employed, even off the second service, because both the server and his partner, remembering their previous misfortune, will probably be anticipating a second effort in the same direction—a toss will surprise them. As a rule, the receiver of the service should lob over the head of the server's partner and aim to drop in the corner, as near the base-line as possible. The lob should of course be high enough to prevent the man at the net from jumping up on his toes and smashing it; but the advice to lob inordinately high off the service should be qualified by the reflection that the longer the ball is in the air the more time will both opponents have to get back to handle it. Some remarks on lobbing will be found elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See page 123.

The need for a combined retrogression in event of either opponent lobbing may be insisted upon. The parallel formation again applies, for it is evident that if only one man retires the advancing opponents have a wide opening which they cannot fail to utilize. Generally speaking, the player over whose head the ball is lobbed should be responsible for the next return; especially should this be so in the case of a tossed reply to the service. It is fatal for the server's partner to rely on the ability of the server to get behind his back; such a conception of the server's functions is contrary to sound tactics. Unless the lob has particularly good length and is adroitly placed, it should be possible, more often than not, for the player at the net to step quickly back and smash the dropping ball. When an overhead volley is out of the question—and practice alone will accurately gauge possibilities—the player will have to race to put the ball between himself and the net. His return will probably take the form of another lob and he will then do well to toss as high as he possibly can, for both his opponents will be strongly entrenched to deal mercilessly with the short lob. Running back to deal with the high bounding lob on the base-line, Beals Wright sometimes executes a remarkably effective stroke, the cultivation of which by other players is certainly to be commended. It takes the form of a low cut drive made with a vertical racket and, aimed low between the two opponents anticipating another lob, is a brilliant scoring shot.

A word to the novice. Endeavour to comprehend the trigonometry of the court. Display a preference for the diagonal volley rather than the volley

that runs parallel to the side-lines. The low cross-volley with both opponents at the back of the court is much more effective than the reckless smash that runs the risk of being picked up on the rebound. And remember this cross-volley can be made both with the vertical and the horizontal racket. If there is no visible opening for a smash, it is better to smash at the nearest opponent and to aim at his feet; but in nearly every case the smash should have a diagonal direction. And bear in mind Baddeley's advice : " If one's partner is not absolutely sure that he will be able to kill a return, but of which he is certain of making such a good stroke that his opponents must put up an easy shot to his partner, he must always make the shot which will lead to his partner killing the return with certainty rather than run the risk of trying to effect the kill himself."

Mixed doubles, with which I do not propose to deal at any length, may be said at the present time to be undergoing a process of evolution. The final result of their development is to come. Ladies' play has shown such remarkable advance in every department of recent years that the time cannot be distant when a similarity between the formation and methods employed in a mixed double and those in a men's double will be the rule rather than the exception. Just as the underhand service for the lady has been abandoned in favour of the overhead, so the smash for the feminine votary will come more into vogue. Each season brings more lady volleyers to the front. Their value is incontestably proved in ladies' doubles, wherein a revolution is also taking place; and the confidence and skill which ladies gain in that department

of the game will be reproduced in mixed doubles. For executing those short delicate volleys so prominent in a high-class mixed double several ladies have demonstrated a natural aptitude—a consideration quite apart from the vigour with which many of them can now smash. Some of us may not live to see the equality of the sexes in the single game! In mixed doubles it is on the eve of arrival. It follows then that any suggestions offered in respect to men's doubles are applicable to mixed doubles—in their latest and prospectively permanent form. Ladies will doubtless still continue to play from the back of the court—those that never will become good volleyers may be advised not to attempt the change—and men will still continue to exhaust themselves in practising the art of judicious poaching. But the ranks of both will gradually dwindle.

Unless the man is a good volleyer he might as well retire from the mixed double altogether—I am assuming there is a capable volleyer on the other side of the court. As an alert volleyer he will find excellent sport for his racket. He will quickly discover that the mixed double (as at the moment more generally played) presents new features of attack and defence; there is a wide field for strategy and what is expressively called "bluff." But the bait must be cautiously set, for very often the lady discloses a lively sense of anticipation and is in no mood to be trapped. Ladies to whom any opening is good enough for a return may sometimes be caught down the side-lines by a feint towards the centre of the net; but the man has to show remarkable agility to get back in time. It is well, I think, for the man-volleyer to keep nearer

the service-line than the net during the rest unless he is advancing to kill a soft return. He will find that he has continually to step back to handle short lobs, as well as to dart to either side to volley returns within possible range. If he make his "base" too near the net his movements cannot be so profitable. But he should beware of attempting too much. Even if he gets to the ball and robs his partner of a return from the base-line, he may only achieve a volley that makes it comparatively easy for either of his opponents to drop a ball short into the unguarded region. While there is nothing more effective in a mixed double than a sudden lunge, especially as a counter to the return of the service, energy has to be judiciously expended. The lady might have made as good or even a better return.

The man should carefully nurse his stamina in the early stage; he may want all his reserve strength in the third set. At the same time, there is nothing like a good hustle from the start provided it can be maintained until the other side is thoroughly demoralised. There is more to be done with the lady's return of the service than many men imagine, or at least attempt. Put forth all you know to win your lady opponent's service game—it is often the key to the situation. If the man has anything approaching a good service he may reasonably expect to win that game and provided he is keenly alert and enterprising he may also hope to win his partner's service game. His male opponent's service game he will not calculate to carry; hence the importance of striving for the third game in four. As a return of the lady's service he will find the side-line, often insecurely covered by

the man at the net (who is inclined to guard the centre) a tempting opening, but a safer return is a low drive across the court. From the left-handed court this shot, if low and true and aimed at the lady's backhand, will more often than not yield a return that can be successfully killed. Another very useful return when the lady is serving is a short cross shot that drops near the post. But the angle must be very fine to evade the "sharp-shooter" at the net. When the man is serving this drop stroke may be more confidently employed.

## CHAPTER XI

### DIET AND TRAINING

Good condition more important than consummate skill—Why the veteran frequently beats the man under thirty—The lungs as the body's engine—The blood's vital element found in the most simple diet—Necessary diet—Influence of climate on condition—Fencing a good adjunct—Ordinary fitness and sporting fitness: ought there to be a difference?—Bad effects of the heavy lunch—Drinking between matches—The universal popularity of tea—What should a player drink during a match?—The example of champions—Sleep a sovereign necessity—Ventilation—Regular play

**T**RAINING in a rigorous athletic sense does not commend itself very forcibly to the lawn tennis player. Perhaps if more attention were devoted to the preparation of the mind and the body before an important match we should not witness, as we so often do, the physical and nervous collapse of a man who has voluntarily set himself a task requiring great endurance and concentration. Skill and tactics may go a long way towards victory, but they do not go as far as condition. Cases innumerable might be cited where players, pitted against men inferior to them in the variety of stroke at command and in the grace and effect with which these strokes are executed, have been slowly but steadily worn down and beaten out of court because their stamina failed at a crucial

moment. It must not be supposed that age is always the governing factor. Many veterans, aided no doubt by that habit which experience cultivates of conserving their strength, of not permitting it to be prematurely exhausted in a sequence of unnecessary smashes and fast services, will often show less signs of fatigue at the close of a strenuous match than a player on the right side of thirty. And it has always been acknowledged in the lawn tennis world that grey hairs in court are usually the sign of abnormal energy. Just as grey trousers may often conceal a pair of legs that are phenomenally alert, so may grey hairs cover a head that is full of labour-saving devices—a head that frequently evolves some scheme which leads to the undoing, timely or untimely, of the spirited youngster. After all, the longer a man can retain a racket in his hand and compete at open tournaments the more certain is it that he has discovered the secret of consistently sound condition, and is pursuing a régime dictated not so much by medical science or text-book precept as by practical common sense and a personal study of cause and effect. In this connexion I venture to quote a letter addressed to me by a well-known consulting practitioner whose practice has brought him into contact with many athletes and lovers of games.

*(Letter from Dr. Dabbs to the Author)*

“DEAR MYERS,—You ask me what are diet and training to the lawn tennis player. Well: you pretty well know my views about training; that what is good for the body is good for condition, and that

simple, good food (and plenty of it) with bland unirritating fluids constitute the primary dietetics of that condition. I rather hesitate to specialize as to this much-talked-of 'condition,' because it should be not a specialism but the rule of life.

" However I will tell you my views in a few maxims :

" 1. To compass a great task which never must be a great strain all muscles must be *gradually* prepared, and the heart is a muscle.

" 2. To make preparation and performance easy, what suits the stomach, as easy of digestion, suits the preparation for the task, and the stomach is a tyrant.

" 3. In mechanical engines free lubrication and the avoidance of heated bearings go together as precautionary measures for easy working. The lungs are the body's engine and the lungs want all possible attention. Their carbon or fuel comes from the blood, therefore the blood must contain fuel-elements and the heart as the stoker 'slumbers not nor sleeps.'

" 4. You need, then, blood-food put into the blood which it can distribute to the muscles and the lungs as the middleman of supply and distribution; the wholesale agent is the stomach, the retailers the other organs concerned in digestion. The dustman or waste-remover is needed: and this is shared by the excretory organs.

" 5. As the highest culture involves a sense of proportion so the higher bodily efficacy involves the perfection of balance—balance as to supply and waste. The riddle is (and a very soluble one it is) how to adjust food, select food, supply food—distribution

is the blood's work—and then how to help the skin, secure the due and proper action of the bowels and assist the kidneys to perform their functions. The blood distributes the materials for nutrition. We have so to regulate our lives that these materials are properly used. The equipoise is 'condition.'

"6. The aesthetics of food are over when we have swallowed. Believe me that very accurate and discriminating chemist, the blood, despises vintages, thinks very little of high living and altogether disowns luxury as a *sine quâ non*. The blood has elementary and fundamental first principles and to first principles he reduces all that is sent him by the stomach to 'sample.' His labelling is extremely simple. He will find his vital elements in the most ordinary diet. You may tickle your palate with all sorts of expensive things and yet their value to him is only as to how far he can find in them his vital elements when all the organs concerned in digestion have retailed their residues. He wastes nothing of value: you do that beforehand and he is out of that wasteful competition.

"7. Now what shall you send to that wholesaler, the stomach, to distribute to the retail shops—the other organs concerned in digestion. That is the puzzle. The perpetual customer is the blood. He wants all from them that is of value to him: what is valueless he says 'No, thank you' to. And the retail shops only receive what they are ordained to 'handle.' There is no waste in Nature: waste is man's patent.

"8. Before I deal briefly with foods let me digress thus far to say that to compass condition

the teeth, eyes, ears, and breathing apparatus must be *known to be* in good order. Rotten teeth, mal-adjusted vision, wax-loaded ears and nasal defects which render proper breathing impossible all need primary, and never perfunctory attention. So too the hygiene of our houses must be good and especially the air-supply of our bedrooms. These vital matters settled and we can then proceed to consider other things.

"9. I say nothing of the food a well-to-do or wealthy amateur may take for the purpose of training, for I am more concerned to make 'condition' within the food-reach of all. And so I will only note what I consider necessary and within the power of any man's pocket to obtain. Tea, bread, butter, ham, fresh meat, potatoes, cabbage, cheese. There are the necessaries. These can be varied with porridge, milk, oatmeal, broth, meat, green food, bread and butter and the changes rung between the two. In our climate it is not every man who could train on a vegetable diet, but it is done and well done by one man at least as we all know!"

"10. I have mentioned climate and it must be remembered that climate has its own claims to notice. Train in Northumberland or Norfolk and then suddenly and without climatic preparation try and play in Nice or at Homburg and it would mean a very unusual man to be at his best in such sudden transition.

"11. For great tasks and a set ordeal of any kind (lawn tennis included) the law is uniform. There may be variations as to specific muscle-training, and no doubt the walker and the lawn

tennis player would go on to special and divergent loop-lines at a point of their training. But the law of the body is inexorably the same as to the main issues of demand on rules of health. For most men preparing for ordeals of a severe kind alcohol is unnecessary, smoking is unwise and early hours are essential, early at each end of the day I mean. I have a great addiction to the recommending of fencing as an adjunct for all training. I know no other exercise which so trains nerve, eye and muscle and no similar pastime for keeping the skin supple and in perfect order. I have every belief in the Sandow exercises for arm-suppleness and the increasing of reach and I do not think I could speak too highly of the properly managed Turkish bath.—Yours sincerely,

GEORGE H. R. DABBS, M.D.

"LONDON, E.C.

*November, 1907*

It will be observed that Dr. Dabbs treats this question of training from Nature's standpoint. Experience in lawn tennis, as in other games, has shown that the man or woman who observes with due care Nature's simplest rules for health is better able to undertake a strenuous five-set match than the player who makes use of some quack specific in quest of temporary fitness. Some eminent exponents, notably H. L. Doherty, owe a large measure of their success not only to the fact that they are fit during the progress of a match, but that their mode of living, prompted doubtless by an even temperament, requires them to undergo little if any strict training. They

keep perennially fit by rarely exposing themselves to undermining influences which make absolute fitness so difficult to maintain and which, sooner or later, if pursued, must exercise a baneful effect on a man's game. On the other hand, there are a few happy-go-lucky players—Pim was one and the Allens are others—who can apparently treat training even in a modified form with contempt—players who seem to shape just as brilliantly in court whether they have been lunching on lobster and champagne or whether (as in the case of Pim) they had come straight from a severe mental strain. Between these two extremes—the man whose temperament and habits are such that he is always "trained" and the "brilliant exception"—is the mass of ordinarily constituted players liable to contract all the ills to which flesh is heir and requiring certain definite rules of living.

As to food I have given the common-sense medical view. Here is another opinion,<sup>1</sup> that of Mr. C. B. Fry, whose physical efficiency has been so great a factor in his consistent success :

"With regard to food and fitness, nothing," says Mr. Fry, "is worse than faddishness or the kind of absurdity that prescribes this or that as best for training beyond the limit of ordinary common sense. But food is vital. Look what effect, correct or incorrect, feeding has on a horse. You can no more keep a man fit for games on pastry and highly spiced French dishes than you can keep a hunter fit to go on cake and grass. Quality and amount of food matter to the last degree. But John Porter fed Ormonde on the same kind of best oats as any Master of Hounds

<sup>1</sup> *Fry's Magazine*, November 1907.

gives to his hunt horses. No man can improve on plain English fare such as boys have at any school where they are well done, or as we find in the right kind of farmhouse. There is no trickery in training diet for horse or man. Plain, simple digestible food and the right amount of meat, covers all secrets for the man. The more exercise a man takes the more meat he can properly do with, just as a horse in hard work can do with more corn than when out of it. But there is a limit. The commonest of errors in diet is to suppose that because meat makes muscle, the more meat the more muscle, which is obviously absurd. I believe the test is simple. If you do not feel heavy and sleepy after a meal, but, while satisfied, still bright and quick in the head, you have about hit the right amount of meat, though I believe that most men are the better for eating no meat one day a week. Nearly everyone eats far too much meat for ordinary as well as for sporting fitness : of that I am quite convinced. But except that the amount of meat may be slightly increased, there is no diet that is best for ordinary life and for the strictest training."

How frequently one hears the plaint from tournament competitors, "I am never at my best after lunch"; and the truth of this statement is frequently demonstrated by the slack and erratic form displayed by the speaker. The explanation is simple. The player has swallowed an indigestible meal and hurried on to court to engage in hard physical exercise. Referees at a big meeting, where each competitor must regard himself as part of an organized machine that has to fulfil certain functions in a fixed period, are frequently obliged to curtail a player's luncheon

interval—sometimes it is cut as short as half an hour. In this case the player does a very unwise thing if he tackles the complete menu in the luncheon tent. Tournament caterers contract to provide luncheons at so much a head, usually half-a-crown, and their conception of a competitor's requirements rarely soars higher than cold meats, potatoes, salads and tomatoes, a choice of two fruit tarts, with cheese, butter and bread. Though it may be an inequitable expedient, I have found it very serviceable when one match follows close on another to select the subsidiary items on the bill of fare and leave the principals alone. That is, to take the salads and the tomatoes, the bread, butter and cheese and the fruit from under the pie-crust.

Again, it frequently happens that a man goes into court at twelve o'clock for a struggle which does not finish until nearly two. By that time he has naturally cultivated a prodigious appetite. The temptation is to appease the craving for food by an equally prodigious meal. At three the referee's megaphone may summon the well-stoked warrior to his next battle. The chances are that he feels slack and sleepy, more inclined for a basket chair than for another hard physical bout. In order to minimize the effects of "running over" the regulation meal hour, it is a good plan to eat a dry biscuit or two *before* the lengthy morning match. In hot weather, especially in ener-vating centres abroad, snacks taken judiciously at proper intervals will often sustain the hard-worked competitor throughout the day and leave him in much better form to enjoy the substantial evening meal. A more economical plan is to bring lunch with you and

consume it in the privacy of the pavilion. Raw fruit, especially apples, the juice of which has sustaining qualities, will, I think, be found very beneficial. I have in my mind a well-known player nearing the veteran stage who, though certainly not a vegetarian, rarely eats a meat lunch before a match, confining his repast to some of those simple commodities I have mentioned.

Plain water or at most a simple table water like Perrier is the safest, and to my mind the most efficacious drink during the actual progress of a tournament. Many players close the day's work with a whisky-and-soda, others treat themselves to the luxury of champagne: I would not presume to say there is definite harm in this. But I am more and more convinced that the indiscriminate drinking after every match and *between* matches—especially the consumption of spirits which subsequently tend to lower the vitality, and of such Continental concoctions as iced coffee which are ruinous to the eye—is a mistake. Habit is, of course, a slave in this matter and the etiquette of tournament tennis requires that the victor and the vanquished shall repair to the refreshment bar after the battle is over and that the former shall do the honours. Nothing can be said against this practice which is typical of British sportsmanship and on that account, if on no other, unworthy of reproach. But it sometimes tends to make a man desert his better judgment. That may tell him that his form in his next tie will be improved if he does not drink at all. On the Continent the custom of "standing drinks to the loser" is followed to a more limited degree. At some tournaments the foreigner, though

he may shake hands in a perfunctory manner, picks up his coat and goes off to join his friends before you have pulled down your sleeves. He neither waits to honour you with his company and hospitality if he has won, or to receive a toast at your hands if he has lost. To an Englishman competing in a foreign tournament for the first time this summary withdrawal from the scene of friendly combat is strange and sometimes embarrassing. He mentally questions the propriety of stalking his man and (if innocent of the latter's language) pointing meaningfully to the bar. This digression must not be regarded as a criticism of the foreigner's manners on court. In matters of courtesy he will sometimes give points to the visitor and his hospitality on the larger scale is too well-known to need emphasis. But I think we may take it that the drinking-with-your-opponent habit is of British origin or at any rate of British cultivation.

Tea has ever been the favourite drink for tennis players. I am not sure that lawn tennis does not owe much of its popularity to tea and certainly no other game in its social aspect is so intimately and so indissolubly associated with what Dr. Johnson called "the infusion of a fascinating plant." It was "tea and tennis" that provided the country hostess of the early eighties with a novel and alliterative excuse for organizing a garden party; tea that has called the welcome halt to many a perspiring and somewhat frivolous engagement on the private lawn; over tea in the open air that perfect bliss comes to the victor and the remorse of the vanquished loses its initial poignancy. Of the several factors that have caused tea to become popular at all foreign resorts, the lawn

tennis tournament is certainly one of the main. In Sweden many of the younger players make a midday meal off tea and its light accompaniments, and though this is a practice not to be commended for the sterner work of English meetings, yet the principle of the lighter lunch deserves recognition.

What should a player drink during a long match? In nine cases out of ten the answer is "nothing at all." This opinion is endorsed by nearly every champion who has fought and won protracted tussles. "When playing," says W. Baddeley, "dispense with any kind of refreshment unless it is an absolute necessity. However, if a stimulant is required, I have found nothing answer better than a cup of warm (not hot) tea, or a little iced water with a dash of brandy in it." The Dohertys speak in the same (tea) strain. "Do not drink," they declare. "If you must drink take some simple drink like oatmeal-water or tea." H. W. W. Wilberforce would even taboo the swallowing of any liquid. "It is far better not to drink at all during a match but simply to rinse out the mouth with strong brandy and water."

Some men automatically send the ball-boy for a drink after the third set. First-class American players have been known to consume three cups of tea during the later stages of a gruelling match. A. W. Gore on "state occasions" has revived his energies through the medium of champagne. I once played against an elderly man who ceremoniously laid a big bar of chocolate on the umpire's ladder; each time we crossed over he would saw off a piece with his racket and consume it during the next game. But only once have I seen either of the Dohertys

take any refreshment during a match ; it was a sure sign that something quite unusual was wrong. In never drinking between the rests, the Dohertys have demonstrated the practical value of the habit.

Adequate sleep is a sovereign necessity in training. It is a trite statement, but nothing so soon upsets a man called upon to use his eyes and his limbs than curtailed sleep. The best time to sleep is between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m., and before an important match I even counsel the player to turn in as early as 10 p.m. Some men seem capable of dancing through the small hours and appearing in court about eleven in the morning outwardly none the worse for the snack of slumber they have obtained. But how many cases are there not where dancing men have gone out of the lists quickly and ingloriously on the morrow of the ball ? Late hours and lawn tennis have never blended well. Needless to say, the ventilation of the bedroom is of the utmost importance, as is the ventilation of the railway carriage. The hygienic enthusiast — he was a tennis tourist — who never engaged a bedroom at a hotel without insisting that the bed should be moved near the window, always open wide, had wisdom on his side, while habit had made him immune from cold. In stopping at an urban hotel, it is always advisable to select the tramless side of the house, provided there are not noisier trains in that half. Likewise, do not fail to inquire of the manager whether dinner at night is more or less a movable feast. Otherwise you may return hungry and tired in the evening to discover that everything is off except cold meat and cheese.

Finally, I would say there is nothing better for

getting into good condition and for keeping fit than regular play. By this I do not mean participating every week in tournaments or playing every day. Three hard sets a day, on four days of the week, to give Baddeley's precept, is a wise rule, as well as a safeguard against the demon of staleness. And one week's comparative rest after two tournaments is also desirable. It is especially so for ladies, who were never intended to go on week after week wielding a racket in nerve-straining and exhausting competitions.

## CHAPTER XII

### POINTS IN TOURNAMENT CONTROL

Why open meetings make their appeal—Selecting a suitable date—Committees and their duties—What is expected of a referee—Some of his trials and tribulations—Desirability of an order of play—The one-man-in-control method—How it works at Homburg—The duties of the competitor—The equipment of an open tournament—How the courts should be marked out and fitted up—The question of balls—Are there too many prize meetings?—Players and their prizes—The practice of “seeding the draw”: Should it be sanctioned or vetoed?—The chances of competitors relatively considered—Umpires and linesmen

NOTHING has advertised the popularity of lawn tennis so much as the ever-increasing volume of open prize meetings. Clubs may come and clubs may go, championships may be captured by foreign hands and the Davis Cup may make a journey to the uttermost ends of the earth, but as long as there are grounds upon which tournaments may be held, enterprising men to run them, and players of both sexes to fill the lists, the game will continue to make its appeal to the public. Indeed, if tournaments have done nothing else, they have proved that lawn tennis is a spectacular pastime capable of drawing crowds, of generating excitement and of compelling the man in the street to recognize its claims. In a first-class double between experts, such as most open meetings provide, you have all

the elements calculated to appeal to the healthy sporting instincts of a British crowd—consummate skill and physical efficiency, almost direct personal contact of the players, generalship, the subtle employment of *finesse* and *coup*, a climax and a definite finish. You have continual movement; you have dramatic effect; you have the knowledge that both sides are *always* striving to win—a conviction that inspires confidence.

Now, as this chapter is included mainly to give information I will suppose the committee of a new and flourishing club have decided to hold an open prize meeting or that a coterie of gentlemen anxious to promote the well-being of a popular resort have come to the conclusion that a lawn tennis tournament would add to the civic attractions. Before any organizing steps can be taken it is necessary for the club or committee to become affiliated to the Lawn Tennis Association, for the simple reason that no player would be allowed to compete at any open meeting in the United Kingdom not sanctioned by the governing body. It is also essential to have the proposed date of the meeting ratified by the L.T.A. In this respect initial difficulties may arise. From the middle of May until the middle of September every week or section of a week is appropriated either by one tournament or by several—in the first week in August as many as eight open meetings are running simultaneously. To squeeze into this crowded field it is therefore necessary to choose some date which does not clash with a neighbouring meeting; for the L.T.A. would be bound to recognize the protest of a committee resenting an incursion

into its preserves. Even as the fixture list is at present arranged it may be doubted whether the sphere of influence of some old-established meetings is adequately respected. Of course the best date is that which immediately precedes or follows that of a neighbouring tournament; patrons of the one will naturally be drawn to the other.

The importance of having good men at the head of a tournament cannot be over-estimated. I am not now referring to the referee, who does not arrive on the scene until the eve of the meeting, but to the secretary and his executive committee. Some of the most successful tournaments I have visited abroad have been engineered and controlled by one man, and though different methods are employed and generally a larger *clientèle* has to be considered in this country I am all in favour of centralizing authority as much as possible. A string of names—especially if an occasional title can be introduced—may look very well on a prospectus or a programme, but it will generally be found that seventy per cent. of these gentlemen are mere figureheads; the bulk of the organizing work falls on the shoulders of three or four zealous officials. The ideal working committee is probably composed of a secretary who exercises the functions of commander-in-chief; a treasurer who deals with all the accounts, receives the gate-money and the seat-money at the close of each day's play, collects competitors' entrance fees and furnishes them with receipts, pays the ball-boys and generally controls the financial side of the meeting; a gentleman whose duty it is to preside at the ball-tent and control the supply of balls to the ball-boys

—carriers, who unless strongly kept in hand may prove a source of much annoyance and some waste; a gentleman who stands by the referee and, like the watchman at a fire-station, keeps a constant look-out over the whole playing arena, giving the word immediately there is a vacant court; and three or four other officials whose work consists chiefly of finding umpires, seeking out competitors, personally conducting them to the court assigned for their combat and generally assisting the referee to keep the programme moving efficiently and expeditiously.

Zealous and willing as the executive committee should be, it is essential they should give the professional referee, who is virtually the tournament manager, a perfectly free hand, deferring to his judgment whenever necessary. The players have more respect for his commands than they have for any other official on the ground, and his long experience and intimate knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of the leading competitors invests him with an authority which committee-men cannot exercise. Indeed, how much committees and players generally owe to the referee it would be impossible to say. A man whose work is never done, who before one tournament is through is busy with the next, who may be required to sit up half the night allotting handicaps and classifying competitors, who journeys as far and as often as a commercial traveller, who is expected to be the embodiment of cheerfulness and courtesy every moment of the meeting, who has to snatch at his meals between the intervals of his exacting labours and frequently to subsist on a

sandwich and a whisky-and-soda covertly consumed, who must be prepared to add to his regular duties those of "confessor," mediator in personal disputes, philosopher and money-lender, who must have a faultless memory for faces, abundant resource and a warm regard for the virtues of the English climate. Such are only some of the qualifications required by a modern referee.

Deciding points of law is the least of his prescribed duties; the really onerous part of his work comes under the following heads, as Mr. F. R. Burrow in an illuminating article<sup>1</sup> points out:—

"First, getting the tournament 'through,' which, in a 'three-day rush,' is a matter demanding no inconsiderable amount of management. Secondly, displeasing as little as possible (a) the committee, (b) the spectators, and (c) the competitors. The committee must have it borne in upon them that, were it not for the invaluable assistance they are affording, the whole thing would be a lugubrious and ghastly failure. The spectators must be provided with the matches they most desire to see, at the time when they most desire to see them, and on the courts where they can see them most comfortably. The competitors must be conciliated; and if necessity ordains that their match is to be played on a court they consider a bad one, they must be promised a good one for their next game; allowed to go and have lunch exactly when they want it; not put on to play directly after lunch; permitted to catch the 5.30 this afternoon and to come by the 11.47 to-morrow morning; given occasionally a day off to go and get

<sup>1</sup> *Lawn Tennis and Badminton.*

married ; and never, never, never, except in the most dire circumstances and when the referee is in his darkest moods, scratched."

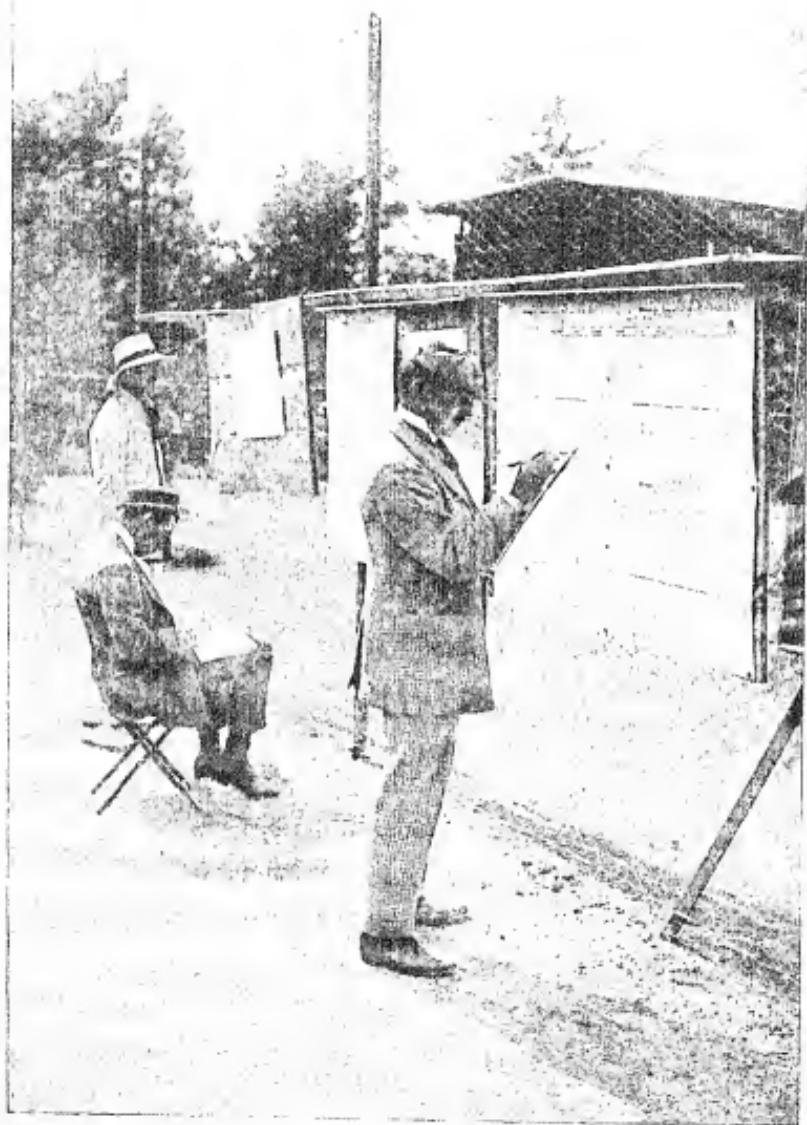
"But besides these more obvious duties, the referee is expected (by the majority of competitors) to provide them with postcards, pens, pencils, telegraph forms, safety-pins, information as to the dates of all future tournaments and entry forms for the same, soda-water, cigarettes and indeed every likely and unlikely thing desired of players. I remember once a fair competitor coming and asking me if I could lend her an elastic band. I produced one, but it was said to be "too small." A larger one gave satisfaction, and she departed with it. But I have never been able to understand to this day, why she should have come back to the tent a minute later to tell me she wanted it to fasten her sleeve up with. And I never got it back."

"The referee's tent, moreover, is made a repository for rackets, 'owe-40' coats, umbrellas, cameras, 'clean' balls and shoes ; and his table, with its neatly arranged diagram of courts and pinned out programme, is made to serve as a seat for lady competitors, who perch upon the front edge of it and make helpful and interesting remarks over a shapely shoulder. It is the referee's duty to explain to the 'crack' man, who never deigns to look at a programme but comes up on the morning of the second day with, 'I say, can't I play (the next best man) now ?' that Providence and the exigencies of the 'gate' have prevented the two meeting till about three o'clock on the last afternoon of the tournament, and to repeat this information at intervals until the actual time for

the match arrives, when each of the finalists will probably want to know why he can't play his Mixed Double. It is also a most important part of the referee's duty to see that every lady competitor, so long as she remains in that event, gets one round of Ladies' Doubles every day. It will not be for lack of reminders if he does not see that this is done; for if two ladies come into his tent at the same time it is almost ten to one that their first words, spoken in chorus, will be, 'Can't we play our Ladies' Doubles?' I have never fully understood whether this desire to play Ladies' Doubles arises from a passionate delight in that form of the game, or from a mere desire to get it over and done with; but the innovation, at a recent private tournament, that all ladies were obliged to go up and volley, would certainly ruin the event from the referee's point of view. As it is, he knows that when he has put a Ladies' Double on to court he need bother himself no further about that court for an hour and a half; that four players will be quite happy, feeling they are at least getting their money's worth; and that one more umpire will be proudly conscious that he has indeed made great strides forward towards the umpire's prize."

While on the subject of referees it may be desirable to devote a little space to the varying methods employed by these indispensable officials for bringing their tournaments to a successful issue. I am bound to say that the perfect system has not yet been discovered or if it has it has not yet been put into practice; and it seems to me, speaking generally, that the management of the modern prize meeting is conducted rather on lines of temporary





THE REFEREE MARKING UP RESULTS AT LES AVANTS, SWITZERLAND

expediency and makeshift design than on a systematic plan carefully conceived and carried out. Take the case of the competitor desiring to know whom he is to play and when he is to play. By purchasing a threepenny programme as he enters the ground he can doubtless ascertain the name of his opponent in the first round, but if more than one round is decided in one day he has no means of finding out the first of these material facts unless he goes to the referee and puts him to the trouble of referring to previous results. The simple remedy—and I wonder it is not more generally adopted at English meetings, as it is at practically every tournament abroad—is to have a notice-board reserved for competitors and on that to paste loose sheets from the programme, care being taken to "repeat" on this board every result as it comes in. So with regard to an "Order of play." I believe Mr. H. S. Scrivener has recently introduced this much-needed reform at his tournaments, thus conferring a precious boon on all competitors, besides adding materially to his own comfort; but at the majority of English meetings it is often impossible for the competitor to ascertain approximately when he or she may be required to go into court. At small holiday tournaments where the bulk of the players are on the ground at the same time and have nothing else to do but to sit about in the sun and await their turn, the absence of any preconceived programme does not matter; but at the big urban meetings, where business men are concerned and where trains have to be fitted in and other appointments considered, it seems to me highly desirable that some attempt at drawing out a rough programme should be made.

Even if the announcement were confined to the order of play for the first hour of the day and to the occupation of the courts immediately after lunch it would be some guide to the mystified competitor, while it would certainly prove helpful to the "gallery" which has a right to know what it is going to get for its money. At Wimbledon, by the way, the excellent plan is now adopted of publishing a list of the chief matches in one or two daily papers each morning—a publicity device that is carried out with much success at the Riviera meetings.

There are difficulties in the way of anticipating too minutely I confess. There is the man who scratches at the last moment and thus causes the abandonment of an advertised tie; there is the wearisome match that exceeds its time limit and accordingly throws other matches, judiciously planned, out of joint; there is the lady who begs as a special favour that she may not be called upon to display her prowess, or lack of prowess, in a gallery court; there is the player, possibly down to appear in a given court at a given time, who gaily goes off to tea for all the world as if he were at a garden-party. But I do not think the disadvantages outweigh the advantages, and I am certain now that open tournaments have assumed the colossal proportions they have, that a better system is wanted than that at present in vogue. It is not satisfactory that competitors should be told that they will be wanted in due course, or that they should be compelled to exert pressure on the referee to get themselves put on, or that they should be required to buttonhole their opponents, find an umpire and ascertain that the

ball-boys are not asleep at the back of their tent. Much of the present discomfort and delay might be averted if overnight and before lunch a rough draft of prospective matches were published. Lawn tennis players are as a rule easy-going people and they are not given to collective protest, but I believe that there is not a single competitor of either sex who would not welcome the universal introduction of "an order of play."

Comparisons are odious and foreign conditions are not always the same as those prevailing at home. Yet I have never concealed my admiration for the manner in which Mr. Charles Voigt runs the international meeting at Homburg. I do not say that all Mr. Voigt's methods would succeed or that they would be desirable in this country. But put into practice at Homburg where men and women of all nationalities, ages and temperaments are competing, they produce one of the smoothest-worked and most enjoyable tournaments in Europe. Let me give Mr. Voigt's secret in his own words:

"I prefer to run a tournament by myself with no committee to help. I make a point of sitting in the centre of the courts where I can see all that is going on and even keep track of how the various matches stand. If umpires would only follow my advice more and call out loudly the state of the game, previous sets, etc., this would be an easier task. I rarely have a court vacant for more than a couple of minutes. I put another match on at once.

"Except for the championship (exhibition) court where most of the spectators sit, I seldom fix matches for certain courts. It doesn't pay. But I make out

a 'List of Matches' for morning and afternoon well in advance without fixing times (excepting approximately for the chief court as a guide to the public), and I expect every player on the list to be down punctually at the hour fixed for play to begin. Then I put matches on as I think best.

"I do all I can to impress upon players to help each other and aid in finding an umpire for their match. I am always willing to promise two or four competitors a court at a certain hour if they can come along with an umpire. Umpiring to my mind is the bane of the game. I should like to see a staff of four or six professional umpires who could go round the various tournaments. Every player should be asked to contribute towards this expense (2s. 6d. or 5s. a head). Elderly ball-boys would do.

"I do not believe, as some referees do, in making a plan with certain matches on certain courts except to the extent I have mentioned. An elaborate order does not pay. The duration of matches is so uncertain.

"When the weather is fine I always get through as many matches in one day as possible. The record for six courts at Homburg (10 to 12.30 and 2.30 to 6.30) was once sixty-seven matches.

"Players should help the referee more than they do by being punctual, by being dressed ready for play, and by not leaving the court without first advising the referee. 'Tea' I regard as a confounded nuisance. I never take anything during the hours of play and I am surprised that players should hang over the teacups as they do.

"I always pay much attention to the public and their wishes and make a point of letting them see

the best matches ; and variety too, such as singles, doubles and mixed. On the conclusion of one match I always call out the next in the chief court so that spectators may know what is to follow.

"In order not to hurt the feelings of Germans at a place like Homburg, I usually write my notices in German and English and generally converse with players in their own language, an attention which they always appreciate.

"One trouble at Homburg is to secure the various players' rooms. Another is finding them partners for the doubles. Tact in this matter is essential. I rarely put total strangers or persons of different social standing together. This is very important abroad, where many ranks are represented."

An important point raised by Mr. Voigt is the locality of the referee's headquarters. Too often the referee pitches his tent where he can neither survey the courts properly nor command the movements of players ; while his chances of watching a match in progress and obtaining a first-hand impression of a player's form which shall assist his handicapping are reduced to a minimum. Where possible it would be well for the ground to be so arranged that the referee takes his stand in the centre, from which position he could be in direct communication with every court and be free from contact with the many people who ply him with irrelevant questions.

I now come to the fitting out of a tournament, the "properties" that a prize meeting requires. Take a concrete case, the Eastbourne meeting of 1907. Twenty courts were here fitted up in Devonshire park. There were eleven events and nearly seven

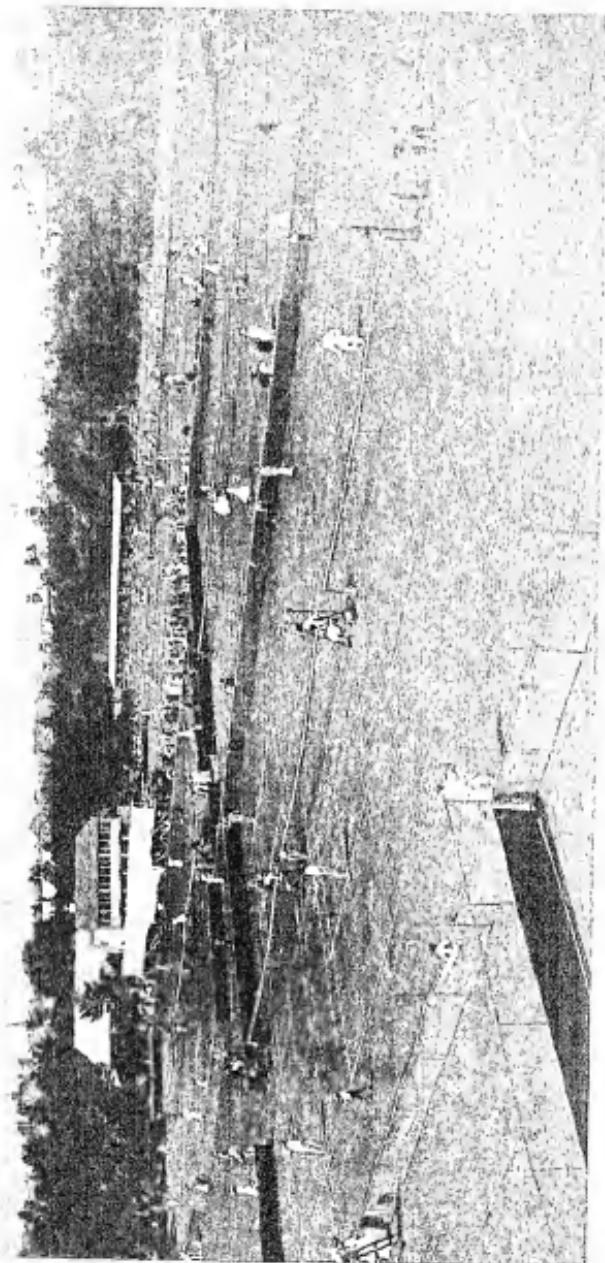
hundred and fifty matches were contested. Here is a list of the materials<sup>1</sup> used:—

138 dozen balls	340 uprights
36 scoring blocks	340 top rods
20 pairs of posts	1000 yards of canvas
20 nets	1010 yards of rope
20 centre guides	310 iron stakes
20 pairs of dividing posts	30 wood corner poles
20 umpires' chairs	1 large swing board for No. 1
20 numbers for marking courts	Court
1000 yards of stop-netting	

Of course there are very few open tournaments that require to be equipped on anything like the scale of the Eastbourne meeting, and the economical system now in vogue by which the manufacturers loan materials to various tournament committees, thus saving them an almost prohibitive expense, must be regarded as a great boon. In the case of tournaments taking place within a radius of twelve miles of London, goods are sent by road on the manufacturers' vans and delivered on the ground. Outside this radius the goods are packed and handed over to the railway company which delivers direct to the ground. As all committees have to pay carriage on goods the amount charged is collected by the carrier at the time of delivery. In some cases the goods will not be left unless this carriage is paid on arrival. The materials should be carefully unpacked by the groundman, whose hands are usually augmented by extra help at such times. They should be arranged in proper order under cover, with the object not only of expediting the actual piecing together but of protecting them from rain.

Where, as so often happens, tournaments are held

<sup>1</sup> The approximate value of the above would be about £500.



DEVONSHIRE PARK, EAST BAWKIN, PITIE, OUT WITH TWENTY COURTS



on cricket fields or plots of grass employed for lawn tennis only once a year, measurements will first have to be taken and the courts pegged out. Needless to say particular attention should be paid to the position of the courts in relation to the sun—they should be arranged as near north to south as possible. The committee will already have settled upon the number of courts they require and in what part of the ground this "gallery" court with its extra space for spectators shall be placed. Of course if there is a grand stand or a seat-equipped pavilion already in position the selection of the site for the principal arena is governed by this consideration.<sup>1</sup>

It is highly desirable that adequate space, say 18 feet, should be left between the side-lines of parallel courts. If there is less space the risk of competitors colliding with each other is considerable; this risk should be avoided at all costs. The better plan but one very difficult to carry out on a limited area is to have all courts placed end-to-end so that each has its own unfettered side-run as well as an adequate run-back. The official recommendation is a clear margin of at least 12 feet on each side and 21 feet at each end of the court. I wish this advice were generally followed. In the accompanying plan of the All-England ground at Wimbledon, arranged for the championships, it will be seen that no court is allowed to interfere with another so far as the players' movements out of court are concerned. On some grounds I could name, even those on which important matches are decided, the juxtaposition of the courts is such that no base-line linesman—and

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for method of marking out a court.

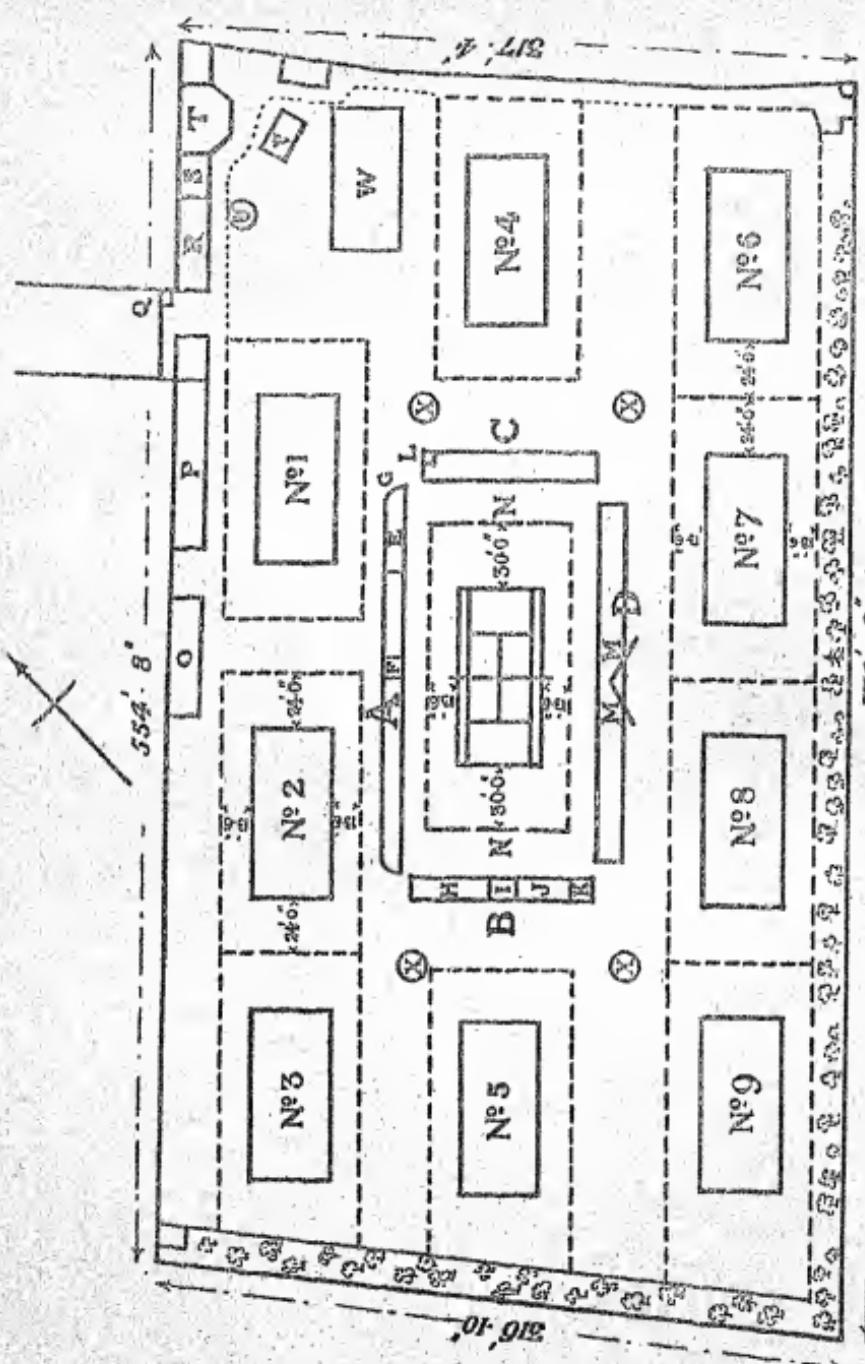
seven line umpires are recommended for important matches!—could possibly find room to officiate, while the legs of the umpire's chair actually stand in the neighbouring court. It is not every ground that can afford the same accommodation as Wimbledon and the side-by-side system is often compulsory, especially where the grand stand is expected to give a full view of two or three matches in progress at once; but the end-to-end system has much to commend it.

As regards the equipment required for a single tournament court I think the following is an exhaustive list:—

1 pair of poles, with necessary fixing arrangements	18 iron uprights, 6 feet
1 net	16 iron toprods, 9 feet
1 centre guide	1 umpire's chair
1 pair of dividing posts, better known as singles sticks	1 box of sawdust
2 24-yard lengths of 7ft. stop-netting	1 number for court
	2 scoring books

The above quantity of netting, it should be noted, allows for backing and wings at each end. If netting be required to go practically all round the court, just twice the amount named above would be necessary. The position in which the poles should be placed can be ascertained by taking a tape measure and measuring off 39 feet down the side-line from the outside edge of the base-line; the centre of the pole should be 3 feet from the side-line. In fixing stop-netting, where possible a run-back of 24 feet should be allowed, and the distance between courts should be not less than 15 feet. All these distances should be carefully measured out and pegged. In order that a straight line be kept when fixing uprights a cord should be drawn lightly along the

ground. The toprods, 9 feet in length, should then be placed on the ground end to end along the cord. This will give the distance at which the holes for the uprights should be bored. The uprights can then be put in position, and the toprods fixed in their places. The next thing is to hang the stop-netting on the hooks provided. It should be arranged alternately in and out of the uprights so that movements by gusts of wind may be obviated. Of recent years it has become the fashion to have the best courts at tournaments completely surrounded or backed by green canvas, an idea originated by Slazenger & Sons for the championships at Wimbledon in 1903. The device forms an ideal background and is much appreciated by players. Canvas and necessary materials for fixing can be hired with the other materials. In many cases where space is at a premium, a complete circuit of canvas round each court is out of question; in that case committees should limit their enterprise to canvas at the back of each court. The higher you can get this green background the better. I have never yet met a first-class player who would not rather have two extra feet of green canvas in front of him than all the applauding ladies in the town. An excellent idea, introduced at Wimbledon, are movable green screens about the height of an average man's shoulder. They are just high enough to cover the aim of the player and yet not so high that a spectator, standing perhaps on a foot-board, cannot watch the rallies over them. To equip one court with an ordinary canvas background only two lengths of canvas, each 24 yards long, would be necessary.



Footpath to Wimbledon Railway Station.

PLAN OF THE ALL ENGLAND GROUND, WIMBLETON, ARRANGED FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

KEY

---- Green canvas round the Courts.

- A. Covered Stand for Public (Reserved Seats).
- B. Covered Stand.
- C. Covered Stand.
- D. Uncovered Stand.
- E. Seats for Competitors.
- F. Subway.
- G. Announcement of Matches.
- H. Reserved Public Seats in Stand B.
- I. Committee Box.
- J. Members.
- K. Press.
- L. Seat Office.
- M. Scoring Board.
- N. Green Screens at ends of Centre Court.
- O. Tea Tent.
- P. Refreshments.
- Q. Entrance and Turnstile.
- R. Dressing Rooms.
- S. Secretary's Office.
- T. Pavilion and Bar.
- U. Referee's Tent.
- V. Extra Temporary Dressing Rooms.
- W. Tea Enclosure.
- X. Summer Houses.

I believe I am right in saying that under the present system, which appears to work efficaciously, all goods loaned to a tournament may be offered for sale after the meeting is over. As the manufacturers considerably reduce their ordinary price—in view, I suspect, of the advertisement they receive and of the profit they make over the sale of balls—the committee by pushing the sales of those goods may help considerably to defray the cost of carriage. Material which is not used is either returned to the manufacturers or is despatched to the next meeting on the circuit.

In respect to the number of balls required the quantity is naturally governed by the number of events, the number of matches, the condition of the courts and the weather. At Eastbourne, as I have said, 138 boxes, each containing a dozen balls, were devoted to 750 matches; but the weather for this meeting happened to be exceptionally fine. Never stint players over balls is a safe rule, and beware of discriminating too much between the needs of the crack and the needs of the ordinary competitor. The latter has paid his entrance fees and is just as much entitled to consideration as anybody else. There is a happy medium in this matter and some executives just hit it. In wet weather or in failing light the appeal of players for new balls, even those engaged in handicap events, deserves the utmost consideration. There was a well-known tournament habitué with a stamina not particularly sound, who made a practice of demanding new balls at the beginning of the third set, no matter what the condition of the original balls might be. His friends thought that it might be a subterfuge to gain a

second "wind" and to test their suspicions the ball-boy on his arrival at the pavilion with the usual request was told to take back the old balls (which were not really old) and say nothing about it. He carried out these instructions and the wily warrior was none the wiser, though he was certainly the fresher.

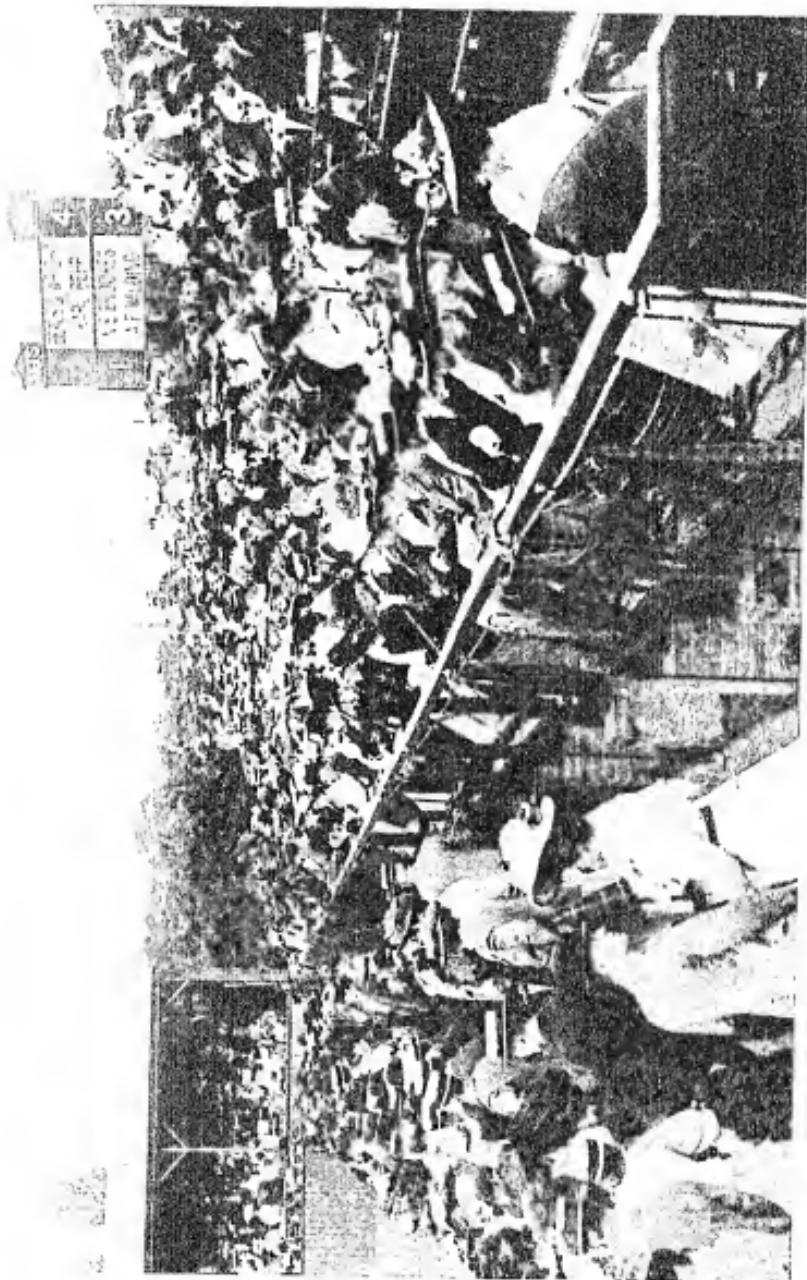
I am tempted to introduce here another ball story. It relates to the Buxton Meeting, when its glory was a little brighter than it is to-day. Dr. Dwight, the well-known American player and now the President of the U.S.N.L.T.A., was making a British circuit. He had at that time an almost ungovernable passion for new balls and at Dublin, where he had previously been competing, this craving had been satisfied with true Irish hospitality. But at Buxton, out of consideration for their balance sheet, the committee could not deal with quite so lavish a hand ; nevertheless they were prepared to make an exception in the genial "Doctor's" favour. Dwight entered the referee's tent scenting a possible match. B. C. Evelegh, then as now, was in charge of the reins and duly allotted the American a tie in the Handicap Singles. "New balls of course?" said Dwight. "They are ready, waiting for you," replied the secretary,<sup>1</sup> his eyes twinkling through his glasses. Off went Dwight to uncase his racket. Meanwhile the secretary winked at Evelegh and called Ernest Renshaw on one side. The result of this interlude was that the great "E. R." went forth to fill the umpire's chair, two ball boxes under his arm. Dwight and his opponent appeared in court and Dwight said to Renshaw, "Got those new balls, Ernest?" "Yes,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. A. J. Harrison, to whom I am indebted for this recollection.

here they are," the umpire answers, proceeding to open one of the boxes. Turning his head slightly on one side, Renshaw mechanically dealt out a dozen balls—the very oldest and absolutely the dirtiest that could be found on the ground! "What the dev—," began Dwight, almost foaming at the mouth. But before he got further, Renshaw glanced down, pretended to grasp the source of Dwight's wrath, humbly apologised for the secretary's lamentable error and immediately dealt out a brand new half dozen from the other box.

The prize meeting has exercised such potent influence on the spread and popularity of lawn tennis that the casual observer might have some ground for supposing the game existed solely to promote its interests. Of course that would be a misconception. There are hundreds of club committees that have never permitted their thoughts to run in the direction of an open tournament and there are hundreds of players who have never deigned to lift their rackets in public competitions. In thus avoiding the anxieties and perils of tournament management and tournament play both parties perhaps have little cause for regret. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that tournaments have their limitations in usefulness and were never intended to be the sole objective of the lawn tennis votary.

The question as to whether there are not too many tournaments and consequently an excess of competitive zeal may be legitimately raised. Perhaps there *are* too many, though I know of no tournament which does not attract new competitors every year, and that is not, apart from the enjoyment it affords



THE SCORING BOARD AT THE CHAMPIONSHIPS, WIMBLEDON



players, a source of social interest and gaiety to the local people.

The suggestion that leading players make a tour of open tournaments in order to pick up the valuable prizes that may be offered is merely prejudiced gossip. When competitions are thrown open to the whole country and efforts made to secure a representative entry, it is only natural, first-class talent being limited, that the same players should head the lists at one meeting after the other. Their success is the normal result of superior skill and consistency. Because it is repeated in several different districts before differently constituted crowds I do not see that the charge of prize-hunting, preferred by a few people, can be sustained. I do not say that here and there you will not find a man—and dare I add a lady?—carefully scanning a fixture list in search of a pocket-tournament off the beaten track of the cracks that shall yield a haul of prizes; in every pursuit and pastime there are men with eyes on material gain. But so far as the vast majority of tournament competitors are concerned, my experience is that the silver contents of the prize-table are rarely considered. I believe I am right in saying they are not unfrequently left unexamined. Good courts, a salubrious environment, a genial committee and the presence of other capable players are much more likely to influence the entry at any one meeting. Perhaps I ought to have put this last consideration first. It is a recognised maxim with all tournament promoters that one first-class player will bring another; that the surest method of securing a representative entry is to advertise the fact that a certain number

of distinguished exponents have already promised to come. After all, do you suppose that men who have played high-class lawn tennis for any length of time find pleasure in sweeping through the lists at a meeting which neither fires their zeal nor tests any of their good qualities? Not all the silver mugs in the world would have induced H. F. Lawford to make a circuit of the minor meetings. The Renshaws, the Baddeleys, the Dohertys and all those giants of the game whose names and fame will live in lawn tennis history have given us substantial proof that the value of their prizes was to them a matter of indifference.

*A propos* of prizes. I may perhaps touch briefly upon a practice that is rapidly gaining ground and that up to the present, so far as I am aware, has not received the official consideration of the Lawn Tennis Association. I mean the practice of "seeding" or doctoring the draw. Rule 17 in the regulations governing prize meetings declares that the draw shall be conducted in the following manner: "Each competitor's name shall be written on a separate card or paper, and these shall be placed in a bowl or hat, drawn out one by one at random and copied on a list in the order in which they have been drawn." It is scarcely a secret that this rule is honoured as much in the breach as in the observance. I am not prepared to deny that there are valid reasons why this should be so. In an entry (say) of thirty-two players for an open single, it would be possible, if the players chanced to be drawn in order of merit, for the seventeenth best player to win the second prize! As no less an authority than "Lewis Carroll"

has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> the mathematical chance that the second best player will, by the mere accidental arrangement of pairs, get the prize he deserves is only sixteen-thirty-firsts; while the chances that the best four shall get their proper prizes is so small that the odds are twelve to one against its happening. It has also been urged as a point in favour of "seeding the draw" that as the success of many tournaments and therefore the entertainment of competitors depends largely on "gate-money," the interests of the public should be considered so far as ensuring that the best players or the best pairs meet in the final rounds. Another argument is that the "majority of players" if consulted would raise no objection to the practice.

As against these considerations, all worthy of attention, must be set others which I think should turn the scale in favour of a "regulation" draw, or at any rate should lead to the official sanction of the present unauthorised system. One is that every additional element of chance introduced into tournament play, provided it be a legitimate element, is to be encouraged; the moral certainty with which winners of many open events can be detected before play begins is frequently a source of comment. The programme often hangs fire on the first two or three days of a week's tournament. If the crack players by a chance draw were brought more into conflict in earlier rounds, my impression is that committees would reap the benefit of the attendant excitement while suffering no appreciable difference in their receipts on the Saturday, *ipso facto* a day for crowds. Further, if

<sup>1</sup> A pamphlet on *The True Method of assigning Prizes, with a Proof of the Fallacy of the Present Method*, by Charles L. Dodgson, M.A.

you "manipulate" the draw, you have to run the risk, and it is often a serious risk, of disorganising and delaying your programme on the last day, owing to the presence of the same players in several finals. These champions may properly plead fatigue and wish to postpone one of their matches to the Monday, and the public who have paid their shillings or their half-crowns at the gate may complain that only two, instead of the three advertised finals, have been decided. Whereas if the draw had proceeded on regulation lines, as of course it does at several meetings, the chances are against a sequence of the same finalists. The poor referee is accordingly relieved of much anxiety. A stronger argument against the practice is that its unchecked pursuit might lead to greater and more reprehensible delinquencies. I was once present at a foreign tournament where there was no draw at all, the manager of the meeting merely selecting the four semi-finalists and filling in the gaps with the other players, most of them "rabbits." Nobody minded except one Count who had never entered for the open singles but found his name included. I have no doubt the manager considered he was acting for the best, as probably he was. But in England, where amateur competitors are concerned, it is highly desirable that regulations carefully framed by governing bodies should be observed, not only in the law but in the letter. It is in the interests of all amateur games that such a course should be adopted.

A final word about umpires, that much-maligned body of honorary officials who can generally claim our sympathy, but less frequently secure our thanks. I think there can be no question that the incompetent

umpire, who is so often pressed into service, like the steeds in Hobson's stable, is a great danger to the interests of the game ; for his ignorant rulings may invoke unseemly discussions on court that prejudice the game in the eyes of spectators, oblivious to the shortcomings of the man in the chair. Moreover, umpire's mistakes, which have a tendency of being committed at crucial periods of a contest, may and often do vitally affect the result of an event and lead to much annoyance and heartburning on the part of competitors. Two episodes are recalled to my mind in contemplating the "iniquities" of umpires. One relates to the late Harold Mahony who usually displayed a commendable tolerance towards doubtful decisions. On one occasion, however, the umpire's decrees were so flagrantly inaccurate as to stir the placid waters of the Irishman's mind—he shot an ominous scowl in the direction of the chair. A look of injured innocence swept the official face. "Champion or no champion," he declared, "you needn't think you can browbeat *me*." To which admonition Mahony softly replied, "I was looking at you more in sorrow than in anger."

I think it was at Brighton several years ago that G. W. Hillyard—he will, I know, forgive me for recalling this incident—was so upset at the remarkably defective umpiring which caused him the loss of an important match that, to calm his ruffled feelings, he strolled down to the beach and sat down under the brow of a breakwater. Hours passed and the other events in which the present All England secretary was competing were entirely ignored. At length Hillyard rose in a more philosophical frame

of mind and returned slowly to the ground. He was met by the secretary who offered him the sympathy he deserved. "I should not have minded so much," said G. W. H., now his genial self again; "only he wore a green shirt and would persist in calling me '*Illyard*.'"

Enrol the names of as many trustworthy non-playing umpires before the tournament begins is good advice that all executives should follow. Make their lot as light and as comfortable as possible and let them know by little acts of courtesy, such as invitations to the tea tent, admission passes for their wives, that you appreciate their services. I am sure it is desirable as much as possible to relieve competitors from the task of umpiring. True, keen spirits enjoy it and when all prospect of victory in the lists is gone may actually compete with one another for the honour of mounting the chair. Where these enthusiastic players are known to be competent—and it is not every player, good, bad or indifferent, who makes a sound umpire—engage their services by all means. But never press a competitor to arbitrate a match just before he is going to play; both the vision and the temper may suffer in such a manner that the result of his own tie may be affected. Nor is it advisable to get any umpire to officiate at two matches without a short interval. Umpiring is wearying to the flesh as well as to the spirit, and I have sometimes groaned inwardly when in a ladies' double, already stretched to an abnormal length, the prospect of 'vantage games in the third set becomes imminent. In many matches it is usual and desirable to have linesmen, especially when foot-faulting is not

only suspected but openly committed. But I know of many players who, except on all but the most stressful occasions, would rather their match be conducted by one thoroughly competent umpire than by a corps of gentlemen on the line, often selected hurriedly from the crowd, whose decisions have to be respected by the umpire whatever his own impressions may be. A faulty judgment on the line has lost many a momentous match. I am not sure that it has not affected the championship table. In selecting his line lieutenants before an encounter the captain of the court cannot be too careful, even at the risk of offending a short-sighted vice-president!

## CHAPTER XIII

### HANDICAPPING

The old bisque system and its defects—Limitations of the "quarter" system—The "sixths" method—Difficulties under which official handicappers labour—Mr. H. S. Scrivener explains his *modus operandi* and offers some suggestions—Personal experience of players' form desirable—A comparison between English and foreign handicapping—The methods of a leading Continental handicapper—Is the present system unsound in principle?—The advisability of club handicapping—Some voluntary systems not recognised at tournaments

CHAPTERS in a book, like the holes on a golf course, should vary in length. I accordingly propose after the long chapter we have just left behind to make this one a "Bogey 3."

The principle of handicapping in lawn tennis is not quite as old as the game itself, but it was put into practical shape as far back as 1885 when Mr. Henry Jones ("Cavendish") to whom present-day votaries owe a heavy debt of gratitude wrote a letter to the *Field*. The first system introduced was called the bisque system and in view of its variable character and the unsatisfactory results which it brought about, it is as well that the present generation of players know it only by name. A bisque was one stroke taken by its owner whenever his fancy or the state of the match prompted, except when the ball was actually in play or after he himself had served a

fault. It was given either in augmentation or diminution of other odds. Two bisques was the largest number ever given at one time, though occasionally players would play fancy matches among themselves, giving four, five, and even six bisques. Besides bisques (which may be described as "floating sixths") there were the stationary odds: Half-fifteen (the equivalent of the present three-sixths), fifteen, half-thirty (the equivalent of 15.3) and so on; and the odds ran thus: one bisque, two bisques, half-fifteen, half-fifteen and one bisque, half-fifteen and two bisques, fifteen, fifteen and one bisque, and so on. Owed odds ran thus: one half-fifteen for two bisques (*i.e.* the over owed half-fifteen and received two bisques), owe half-fifteen for one bisque, owe half-fifteen, owe fifteen for two bisques, owe fifteen for one bisque, owe fifteen, and so on. As may be imagined, a bisque was a very valuable thing in the hands of a player who knew how to use it. It nearly always meant a game, and probably an important game, and it was no uncommon thing for a man to declare that he would sooner owe another half-fifteen for two bisques than play him level. Conversely, in the hands of a player who was ignorant of its value, a bisque was almost useless, for the player almost invariably took it in such a manner as to waste it. As Mr. Wilberforce points out, the old method attributed to the bisque a fractional value of fifteen which was notoriously inaccurate when odds were given and still more so when they were owed.

From the bisque players passed to the "quarter" system which reigned for about four years. This plan divided fifteen into quarters—one quarter, two

quarters and three quarters of fifteen, both given and owed. For a player to give one quarter of fifteen meant that he conceded a stroke to his opponent at the beginning of the second, sixth and every subsequent fourth game of a set; two quarters of fifteen meant the concession of a stroke at the beginning of the second, fourth and every subsequent alternate game; three quarters meant the concession of a stroke at the beginning of the second, third and fourth games, and so on. In the case of owed odds a quarter fifteen meant that in the first and fifth games a player must win a stroke before he could begin to score in the ordinary way; two quarters that he must win a stroke in the first, third and subsequent odd games.

Though a great improvement on the bisque system, this plan provided a unit, one quarter of fifteen, which was too large and a number of available classes which were too few. The basis of handicapping by odds needed broadening not only to increase the accuracy of the handicapping but to ensure that players, whose form differed materially, met on more level terms. The present "sixths" system was accordingly evolved, primarily by Mr. W. H. Collins, and introduced in 1894. Its principle extends the giving or owing of odds to six games instead of four, and the details of its working are fully set out at the end of this volume.<sup>1</sup> The table of differentiation by which players allotted different odds, whether owed or received, could meet on an adjustable scale was wisely amended in 1906 and is now, subject to defects inherent in a system of this

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

arbitrary character, about as near perfection as it can be. It may be noted that the United States did not adopt the quarter-fifteen system until 1896,<sup>1</sup> six years after its introduction in England, but after that a year sufficed to bring the two countries into line.

The leading handicappers for whose conscientious and impartial labours none but feelings of respect can be entertained adopt various methods of arriving at a just handicap and it is not unnatural, the system being what it is, their handicaps should sometimes materially differ. It would be invidious on my part to express any opinion on the individual merits of these methods and the results achieved. Taking into account the initial difficulties under which the handicapper at every big tournament works—insufficient information, imperfect data that may sometimes be intentionally withheld by a competitor, the vicissitudes of form which even the best-known players display, the appearance of the "unknown quantity" or the re-appearance of some player after a protracted absence from the arena—taking these factors into account the adjudications are remarkably sound and their accuracy is very rarely impugned by the results of the matches. I said that it would be invidious to discriminate in the matter, but I do not think there is any harm in remarking the wonderfully consistent success that has attended the efforts of Mr. B. C. Evelegh, the *doyen* of referees, in the department of handicapping. I have never attempted to fathom the complexities of Mr. Evelegh's system, nor do I think anybody, except that gentleman himself, could give a detailed analysis of its working. Yet the results are convinc-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Paret.

ingly sound. They must evoke admiration for the far-reaching knowledge, unique experience and utter lack of bias which govern the work of this handicapper. I hope I shall see his hatless head at many a tournament to come.

Mr. H. S. Scrivener, who became referee at Wimbledon two seasons ago and whose handicapping record is both long and honourable, has kindly supplied me with the following interesting notes on his system:

"The system upon which I handicap (be it understood that I claim no originality whatever in respect of it) may thus be set down: I have a *fixed scale* from which I very rarely depart; that is to say, I handicap everybody from the best handicap player of the year, whom I place on the owe 40 mark, or if need be, behind it. I might even say that I handicap everybody from the All England Champion, for I would always put the A. E. Champion on the very back mark *honoris causa*. I regard R. F. Doherty as the best handicap player of the day, and I should place him at owe 50 or at any rate at owe 40.3, though the handicap table does not actually go beyond owe 40 of which more anon. But A. W. Gore, whom I regard as the next best handicap player to "R. F.," has recently won one of my handicaps from owe 40. Other players follow in order of merit up to 30 and sometimes beyond it. The advantage of this system is that every player has a fixed handicap, unless of course he improves or deteriorates. This makes it easier work for the handicapper when he goes on to his next tournament and is also more interesting for the player, for he can tell at a glance whether the handicapper thinks he is improving or

otherwise. I seldom make a bad mistake with a player when once I have handicapped him and have his record, and I attribute this to the 'fixed' principle which I adopt.

"Where there are two classes I still preserve the same scale, putting all players above 15.3 in the second. The 15.4 players then become scratch in class two, and so on. The advantage of a second class (purely from a handicapping point of view: there are others) is that it enables you to give more start to a really weak player. In a one-class handicap you cannot well go beyond 30.3, but in a two-class you can give 30 in the second which is the equivalent, in a one-class, of about 40.3—an obviously impossible start. Sometimes, when the first-class handicap is small, and the second large, I make 15.4 the limit in the first. I also do this with men who express a wish to be in class one. It pleases them and doesn't as a rule hurt anybody else. I make one exception to my *scale* rule but that is only a partial exception. When I get a tournament where the class is weak, *i.e.* where there is no one better than (say) three-sixths or four-sixths, I make what I call 'a second-class handicap with owe-markers'—that is to say, I put the 15.4 men on scratch and make all the players who are better than 15.4 owe rather less than double what they would give to 15.4. Thus a 15 player would owe, in a 'second-class handicap with owe-markers' about 15.1, a four-sixths player about 30 and so on. But where there is a first-class handicap I never make anyone *owe* odds in the second, for if he is good enough to *owe* odds in the second he is good enough for the first. The method, sometimes adopted, of

picking out so many players (generally a small number) and saying 'these shall form the first class, and all the others shall go into the second,' I regard as very unscientific. Another disadvantage of making players owe odds in class two is that when you come to handicap them in doubles you have to go through a laborious calculation in order to arrive at their equivalent handicap in received odds as compared with the players in class one. Thus if A, receiving four-sixths in class one plays in the handicap doubles with B owing five-sixths in class two, what is their right start? To fix it you must first find (or estimate) what B's handicap would be if he were playing in the same class as A. Under my system you can always arrive at what a second-class man's start would be in a first-class handicap by adding 15.4 (ten points) to his start. On rare occasions I alter the scale of a first-class handicap by putting everybody 'on' two or three points with a view to making the games in which the men behind scratch are concerned take less time. For instance, I put the owe-15 men at scratch, the scratch men at three-sixths or four-sixths and so on; but I generally repent of it afterwards because I have always to make notes to remind me of it on future occasions, and I also find that the majority of the players are so used to my fixed scale that they come and ask me what I have been playing at! Moreover, the alteration of the scale generally causes minor discrepancies which partially spoil the accuracy (or what I think is the accuracy) of the handicap.

"I have referred to handicapping doubles. There is really some art in this as well as in single handi-

capping, although it naturally takes less time once you have got your singles completed. The ordinary rule-of-thumb method is to add together the single starts of the pair you are handicapping (or, if one is an ower and the other a receiver, to subtract the ower's start from the receiver's) and divide by two. But there are other things to be remembered. For instance, you may know from experience that a certain player is stronger or weaker in a single than a double and you must make allowance for this. Again two players may be a 'pair' in the true sense, and on that account far stronger in combination than they are individually. This is often overlooked. Or again, if an 'uneven' pair play together, say an owe-15 man and a 15.2 man, they are unlikely to be as strong as an 'even' pair, say a couple of one-sixth men, though the handicap in the two cases would work out at about the same.

"When there are two classes with starts up to (say) 30 in the second and two long-starters in class two go in together in the doubles, you of course get an impossible start. A for instance gets  $15.4 = 10$  points and B  $30 = 12$  points, and you must give each in addition the 10 points allowance for being in class two. The sum is therefore:  $10 + 10 + 12 + 10 = \frac{42}{2} = 21$  points = 40.3! With these people you can really do nothing (unless there are two classes in doubles, which is rare) except put them on 30.3 or 30.2 and pull the whole of the rest of the handicap back four or five points. But of course this has the effect of putting the owers back some eight or nine points and consequently doubling the probable dura-

tion of many matches in the event. You can seldom afford to do this, and when you can't you simply dock these 40.3 worthies of five or six points and put them on the limit, say 30.2, where of course they stand no chance unless they happen to 'come off' in some unexpected fashion; for they are on the same mark as pairs who could give them 15 or more.

"The last paragraph forms a suitable prelude to the few remaining words I have to say about the sixths system itself. To my mind it is the best that can be devised, having regard to the present method of scoring. But for handicap purposes (at any rate) the game is too short. The tables provide for starts up to 40, but no handicapper ever gives 40 for the simple reason that in a game into which the element of luck necessarily enters, you cannot place anybody, however weak, within an ace of every game of the set, every time he meets a man on scratch or behind it. And yet he actually needs 40 as compared with some of the players in the handicap, though you can't give it to him. Thus the following situation frequently arises:—A owes 40, B receives five-sixths, C receives 30.1. A can just about owe 40 and give five-sixths to B, but cannot quite owe 40 and give 30.1 to C, although B if he meets C can give him (C) 15.4. You can't give B less (so as to put him right with C) because in that event A, if he meets him, will smother him; neither can you give C more (to put him right with B) because in that event he will smother A if he meets him, while to move A up so as to give him a better chance against C entails giving him too good a chance against B. In other words, the game is long enough for A to catch B and

for B to catch C but it is not long enough for A to catch C. The only thing to do is to move both A and B back proportionately, but that entails putting A back below owe 40; in fact, lengthening the game beyond its recognized limits. This, of course, is frequently done, but if a man whom I had set to owe '50' came to me and objected to play at those odds I should feel bound to admit the validity of his objection. Personally, I believe the game would be improved—not only in handicaps but in 'levels' too—if it were lengthened at the other end by the addition of another ace thus: 15; 30; 40; 50; game, with deuce and 'vantage and so on' if the score reached 50-all instead of 40-all. But of course this would upset the table of differential odds entirely.

"Another plan would be to use the now obsolete 100-up method of scoring for handicaps. There is no inherent objection to two methods of scoring in the same game; you have it in golf. In fact the two methods bear a close resemblance to match and medal play respectively. In the ordinary method each game is like a hole which you win (or lose) in so many strokes. You may take few or many, but when you have won or lost it, it is the game, or the hole, which counts; the strokes don't matter. In a 100-up game, on the other hand, every stroke counts for or against you, just as in medal play, right up to the end of the 'round.' I believe it to be a fact that lawn tennis players who also play golf prefer match to medal play as a rule. Perhaps there is something in the lawn tennis temperament to account for this. If there is I am sure that it also accounts for the 100-up game having fallen into desuetude.

But I am sorry that it is so. I feel sure that with a little practice I could turn out some very satisfactory handicaps under the 100-up system (100-up, by the way, is merely a name; a shorter game would probably be necessary at most tournaments) and I believe the variety of the thing would be appreciated."

Mr. G. M. Simond, another leading handicapper, the accuracy of whose allotments is reflected in the scores registered, says that he has "no particular system of handicapping and that it is beyond his powers to invent one." I gather from this that Mr. Simond bases his odds, as other handicappers have not always been able to do, on personal knowledge of the competitor's form previously gained in court. That is to say, he regards his own form, now seasoned into a condition of stability, as a standard from which reliable comparisons and deductions can be obtained. It is an excellent plan, for it brings home to the handicapper the propriety of taking into account varying conditions and their effect on different competitors. For example, some players are as much as fifteen better on hard courts than they are on grass, and *vice versa*. Personal experience of these changes in form is a most valuable asset for a handicapper. Mr. Simond, by the way, has this criticism to offer of Continental handicapping: "My feeling is that the back-markers are often put too far back and the genuinely bad players not far enough forward--a method of handicapping that tends to make games unnecessarily long besides giving the receiver of odds a very poor chance of success."

My own experience confirms this view, the aim of

some Continental handicappers, especially those who may be called amateurs, apparently being to respect the dignity of the best players by making them owe sufficiently imposing odds, and yet giving them a by no means difficult chance of securing the first prize.

Even when the odds are most accurately adjudicated by experienced handicappers, the stronger player, unless crushed by excess of odds, as Mr. Heathcote points out,<sup>1</sup> has always a reserve in service, skill, judgment and confidence that will probably suffice in a close contest to turn the scale. If any careful comparison of the results of British and Continental handicapping be made, it will probably be found that the poorer player is more mercifully treated in England than abroad. By this I mean that the chances of a back-marker "coming through" at home are considerably less than they are on the Continent.

Mr. Charles Voigt, whose task of handicapping at fashionable foreign resorts like Homburg, is not made easier by the cosmopolitan character of the entry, sends me the following brief "note" as to his system :

"I rarely handicap any player without first having seen him play and I think I may say I can usually 'size up' a new-comer fairly quickly. If wholly unknown, I put him or her into the open singles<sup>2</sup> (without charging them entrance fee for this event) and carefully watch the form displayed. I make a point of keeping all Continental lawn tennis journals

<sup>1</sup> Badminton volume.

<sup>2</sup> Regulations governing English meetings would not permit of this device, though its value as a guide to form may be admitted.

and of carefully following players' performances—German, French, Dutch, Belgian, etc. I am rarely mistaken in handicapping them against each other, making due allowance for the brilliant but erratic exponents such as the Continent yields in large numbers.

"In doubles I never add up each player's singles handicap and divide by two, as some referees do. I base my handicap on the previous experience in double harness which the couple in question may have had, and I also take into account the volleying capacities of each pair and as to whether they have had more experience in doubles than in singles. Age and condition must also be a factor; but one has to be on one's guard against the veteran who secretes as much stamina as the youngster."

Mr. Wilberforce is doubtless right when he says<sup>1</sup> that the present system of handicapping, however much it may have been improved by recent changes, is unsound in principle—unavoidably unsound, he adds. "The large number of players who enter for handicaps," remarks this authority, "renders it absolutely impossible to assign the odds to them separately in pairs before each round, and recourse is compelled to an arrangement in classes which is permanent and unchanged throughout the competition. This system depends for its accuracy on the hypothesis that if A say, can give B the odds of fifteen, and C and A are equal players, it necessarily follows that C can give B fifteen. Now I have no wish to exaggerate, and will therefore only say that in very many cases this assumption is entirely

<sup>1</sup> *Lawn Tennis*, by H. W. W. Wilberforce.

incorrect. It ignores completely the difference between styles of play, the familiarity with the opponent's game and other similar circumstances which exercise great influence in determining the odds which lie between two individual players; in short, it looks upon men as machines."

It is a pity that some system cannot be introduced similar in principle and in practical value to the golf handicap—a handicap that should be previously determined by club committees and should be respected by the executive at an open meeting. Not many clubs may possess an "owe-thirty" or even an "owe-fifteen" member, whose form is, so to speak, standardized and against whom other members, desirous of securing a recognized handicap, could compete, *the aggregate of the aces* scored by each side being compared. But nearly every club of any standing has members who have been handicapped (whether rightly or wrongly) at open meetings and against these the aspirant for an official handicap could always try his skill. As men improved or deteriorated, their handicap, always regarding the best member as "bogey," could be adjusted—it would give an added zest to club games. It does not follow that the open tournament handicapper would necessarily adopt the club handicap, but he would at least know that it had the official sanction of a reputable committee—that he could base his own handicap on something more tangible than the inconclusive evidence frequently submitted by the player himself. A lady is reported to have given the following "line" as to her capacities on an entry form: "Five years ago the vicar's wife gave me fifteen in every game, and she beat me

easily. She still gives me fifteen, but now I always beat *her* easily." On such ambiguous information do handicappers under the present system sometimes have to work.

Other systems of handicapping, far less complex than the sixths system, which is still a mystery even to some regular tournament votaries, may be judiciously employed in practice games. Where one player is considerably weaker than another it is not a bad plan to deprive the better man of the use of his opponent's court between the service-line and the net except for the service. This handicap will require him to make good length returns and deepen his volleying. Or, the better man may be required to play only into one half of the whole court, the centre-line being extended for this purpose to the base-line. This will improve his direction. It is also possible to "cripple" the superior man by depriving him of the use of the volley, or of the ground stroke, though in some cases neither of these losses might prove a sufficiently big handicap. To limit a man to one service and abolish the fault is another excellent handicap which serves a double purpose. The 100-up system, mentioned by Mr. Scrivener, is capable of reliable adjustment, but I confess that as a golfer who favours match play in preference to medal play, I have found this method of scoring rather tedious and calling for more arithmetical precision than a tennis player, faced with other problems, cares to exercise.

Elsewhere in this volume I mention the match in which Mr. Ernest Renshaw handicapped himself by wearing a lady's skirt, apparently with little detriment

to facility of movement. As a last resort, this penalty might be recommended to English handicappers seeking to reduce the powers of the "owe-forty" man. But the linesmen would need to be warned that the difficulties of their position would be considerably increased!

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE CONSTRUCTION OF COURTS

The good grass court the exception—Essential requirements—What makes the best background?—Relative cost of turfing and seed-sowing—How to carry out effective draining—Turfing a new lawn—How to sow seed—Some mowing and rolling tips—Renovating a court during the off season—The importance of a turf nursery—Asphalt surfaces compared—A good floor for a covered court—Background for a covered court—Accommodating spectators—Some points from Stockholm—What it costs to construct a covered court

**T**RUTH compels me to admit that the good grass court is the exception rather than the rule. And perfection may be sought for almost in vain. The vast majority of private lawns on which tennis is pursued have some defect in the actual surface or in the immediate surroundings which militates against complete success and renders ideal match play impossible. It might be urged that few owners of private courts are so punctilious about conditions of play as to regard any minor deficiency in turf or background as inimical to the enjoyment of their game. That is a view which only the suburban householder having limited space at his command and no soul above second-class tennis could express; it will not serve the potential owner of a really first-class court.

Let it be affirmed at once that a really serviceable

lawn tennis court must be regarded as a separate entity from the rest of the garden. For something approaching perfection to be obtained the lawn must be tended all the year round with thorough and minute care, and the work of keeping it in order and attending to its manifold needs must be undertaken by someone who understands his business. For the effects of neglect or carelessness are rapidly discernible, and unless certain acts are performed in certain seasons and with a due regard to certain factors the full enjoyment of a summer season may never be realised.

Lawn tennis being a comparatively modern game the fruits of experience in the construction of first-class courts have scarcely had time to mature—at least so it would seem. In many country houses tennis has been adapted to the lawn rather than the lawn for tennis; and as a result the expert who may be called in to effect improvements is faced with difficulties the surmounting of which may necessitate radical changes in the disposition of the garden. A venerable oak that casts its broad shadows over the court may have to be sacrificed, a picturesque bank preventing an adequate run-back may have to be levelled out of existence, or it may be necessary to encroach on beds that lend charm and colour to the grounds. Owners of old-fashioned gardens, who are floriculturists first and lawn tennis players after, may be forgiven if they pause before committing what seems to them sacrilege. But the tennis enthusiast who is building himself a new home and the promoters of clubs, to whom the remarks that follow are chiefly addressed, may be assumed to have no object in view

other than the provision of a true, shadowless and accommodating surface.

The question of background and adequate accommodation is of primary importance. Not only is a level area of 128 feet by 60 feet required—the court should of course be placed north to south in order that sun in the afternoon may not inflict an unconscionable penalty on one side—but the adjacent land must be free from high trees that interfere with uniform light or even from smaller trees the branches of which are deflected by intermittent breezes. Yet the space beyond the playing area should not be bare and unbroken; an unlimited area makes it difficult to measure the strength of the stroke and accurately gauge the flight of the ball while it offers no shelter from the wind, that most disturbing climatic agent. A good yew hedge or a thick line of shrubs makes a serviceable natural background, provided of course stop-netting is utilised; but better than anything else I like the green-painted, closely-latticed fence about ten feet high such as is found behind the sand courts at Cannes. The turf should come right up to this fence, which ought for greater comfort and convenience to be continued on either side several feet beyond the parallel base-line. A background like this obviates the use of stop-netting, it is not so solid as to prevent light and air from coming through, and its cris-cross structure tends to prevent the ball from bounding back into court with disconcerting force. When a brick-wall is already in position a covering of thick-leaved ivy will form a good background and may be recommended.

Lawns, of course, are made either by laying turf or sowing seed. The chief point in favour of turf is a saving of time, but as against this must be set the additional expense and the difficulty of procuring really reliable turf. Much of the usual turf offered for sale consists of coarse meadow grasses, clovers and weeds ; it is quite unsuitable for the making of a first-class lawn. Again, if turf is laid in the spring the finer and most valuable grasses stand a serious chance of being destroyed by the hot summer sun.

Roughly the cost of turfing a quarter of an acre may be estimated from £16 to £18, whereas the cost of seed for the same area should not exceed £4, 10s. The seed-sown lawn might not be playable by the following June, whereas the turf plot should be. On the other hand, the chances of a satisfactory court the season after favour the seed-sown surface.

Draining, an essential preliminary too often neglected, requires some expert knowledge and is conditional on the situation of the property and the quality of the soil. Land drain pipes are the most advantageous for draining a lawn and they should be laid in herring-bone fashion, a 4-inch piping for the main drain and a 2 to 3-inch piping for subsidiary drains. The pipes should be laid in trenches 18 to 24 inches deep, the subsidiary drains being about 10 to 15 feet apart and entering the main drain at an angle of over forty-five degrees in order not to arrest the flow of the water. It is advisable to set the joints in cement in the vicinity of shrubs or trees, otherwise their roots will enter the drain and possibly choke it ; also to partly fill the trenches with clinkers or other porous material, thereby increasing the

effectiveness of the drain, especially where clay is concerned. As the soil in the trenches is bound to sink in some measure, the draining should be completed several months before the actual sowing of the seed begins.

The correct time to turf is between September and December. If the weather is open it is possible to lay turf during February or March, but the work is far more hazardous and the dry cold winds of late spring are calculated to jeopardise the life of the grass. The process of turfing may be briefly described. The ground has first to be dug to the depth of a spade or more and such alterations made in the level as are necessary. Next the ground must be covered with a liberal dressing of well-rotted dung—about one load of dung to a hundred square yards of ground. Fork or work the dung into the soil so that it becomes incorporated with the surface soil; break down the surface into a fine tilth and rake off all large clods, stones and weed roots; roll and cross roll with a light roller; correct any defects in the level that may have developed; lightly open up the surface with an iron rake and then lay the turfs which *must be cut a uniform thickness* upon the raked surface and beat it down firmly but not too severely with a turf beater. It is desirable to cover the turf with a compost made up of finely sifted soil with which a few pounds of grass seeds have been mixed. Work this compost well into the turf and the cracks between the turf, using a new birch broom or bush harrow. After removing the surplus compost, roll with a light roller. For the next two or three weeks the court may be left alone, giving

the turf time to settle and the roots of the grass to take hold. Then employ a heavy roller.

If seed is to be sown the best period is early in September. The soil is warm at the end of summer and an abundance of rain and dew may be expected that is very beneficial to the growth of the seed. The young grass will have time to become well established before the cold weather arrives; moreover the autumn sown grass will have got a start of the weeds which appear in spring. Having manured and prepared the seed-bed, choose a calm dry day for seeding. Should the soil be wet it will stick to the operator's boots and the level may be seriously disturbed. Slightly stir the surface with a rake and divide up the ground into strips about 3 feet wide by means of pegs and strings; then divide the seed into as many equal portions as there are strips. Sow the seed (selected of course with a view to the geological structure of the soil) by hand with the back bent, taking care to spread it as evenly as possible over the surface. Then lightly rake in two directions, taking care not to bury the seed too deeply. Finally, roll and cross-roll with a light roller.

Given propitious weather, the young grass should appear above the ground after a fortnight. When about one inch in height it is benefited by an application of malt culms, rape dust, prepared compost or Carter's fertilizing fibre. A top-dressing not only protects the grass from extremes of temperature and helps to conserve moisture but supplies nitrogen to the young blades. When the grass has grown another half-inch it is ready to cut, which may be done either with a freely running

machine set rather high or with scythes. Too much importance cannot be attached to the necessity of keeping young grass (in fact any grass on a tennis court) cut quite short. Otherwise, instead of tillering out and covering the ground, it will grow thin and long. If thin or bare places are detected on a newly sown lawn they should be repaired at once by carefully loosing the surface soil, sowing a handful of seed and covering and rolling in the usual manner. Roughly speaking about two bushels of seeds are required for the full area of a court.

Half the grass courts in this country, it is not too much to say, are spoiled by neglect, not only during the winter but while the season is actually in progress. If a lawn is not kept up to the mark it is certain to deteriorate; the weeds will multiply, the soil become poverty stricken, and eventually it will have to be relaid, re-sown or renovated. To maintain a lawn in first-class condition periodical top-dressing is absolutely essential, much more so when the turf is frequently used. Rolling and mowing are regular and natural processes to which it might be assumed close attention is devoted; but even these elementary functions are often neglected. The only way to obtain good thick turf is by constant use of the mowing machine. Two inches may be considered the *extreme* length to which the grass should grow at any time of the year. Provided a lawn be free from weeds—and this qualification is very important because otherwise the weed seeds would be scattered all over the lawn—and is kept closely cut, the machine can be used without the box; the roots will then be afforded a certain

amount of protection during the hot weather. I assume, of course, play is not actually imminent.

Needless to say have a good machine in use, not a cheap, soft-metal article. Sweep the lawn before cutting and take special care to remove any stones, worm-casts or other irregularities. And do not omit to oil the bearings, the edges of the knives and the ledger blade with best "sperm" or olive oil before using the machine. Any old or dried-up oil should be wiped off with cotton waste. The knives when properly set should revolve freely and cut a piece of note-paper at any part of the blade ; too tight setting, a common fault, will make the machine draw heavily. After using the mower give it a comprehensive cleaning and greasing before putting it away in a dry place. These may sound elementary maxims, but if satisfactory mowing is to be carried out they cannot be too strongly enforced.

As for rolling, grass must have a firm surface in order that it may thrive. On a new lawn with the blades as yet weak a light roller can only be used, but as soon as the grass is strong it will bear and demand a heavier implement. Do not always roll in the same direction ; roll from north to south one day and from east to west the next. Do not roll when the ground is hard and dry, when no good accrues, or during frosty weather, when only serious damage results ; but roll frequently during the spring and autumn.<sup>1</sup> A wooden roller made up in segments with the outer edges rounded may be recommended for light work and one need hardly add that if a horse

<sup>1</sup> For the method of marking out and fitting up a court see p. 174 and Appendix.

is employed to drag a roller the animal should wear leather "shoes." When watering—and this process should never be carried out under a hot sun—distribute the water evenly over the court, giving it sufficient moisture to go down to a depth of 6 inches.

The renovating and upkeep of a lawn during the off-season is imperative. Immediately the season ends any traces of weeds should be removed and the level of the court corrected. The weeds must come up, root and branch: insist on seeing the roots before they are thrown away. Top dressing I have already mentioned. In nine cases out of ten the base-line will want patching and for this purpose a nursery should be an indispensable adjunct to every club. It should be a perfectly simple matter to prepare two plots of land, sow them down and maintain them in exactly the same way and with the same care as the courts themselves. There will then be found ready to hand adequate material for renovating all the worn places. When one plot is cleared away, level it up and sow it again—the cost is immaterial while the convenience is great. Never be without a well-stocked turf nursery is a golden rule.

Sheep under certain conditions are useful winter guardians; they will manure the grass, keep it short and by constantly moving about help to give the turf a firm surface. Expense may thus be saved in cutting, rolling and manuring. But sheep in the spring should be cake or artificially fed, otherwise they do little good except keep the grass short. Beware of the sheep that pull out the small grass rootlets. Indeed, except when the club cannot afford the ordinary

methods of cutting, rolling and manuring, one is not inclined to recommend the employment of sheep.

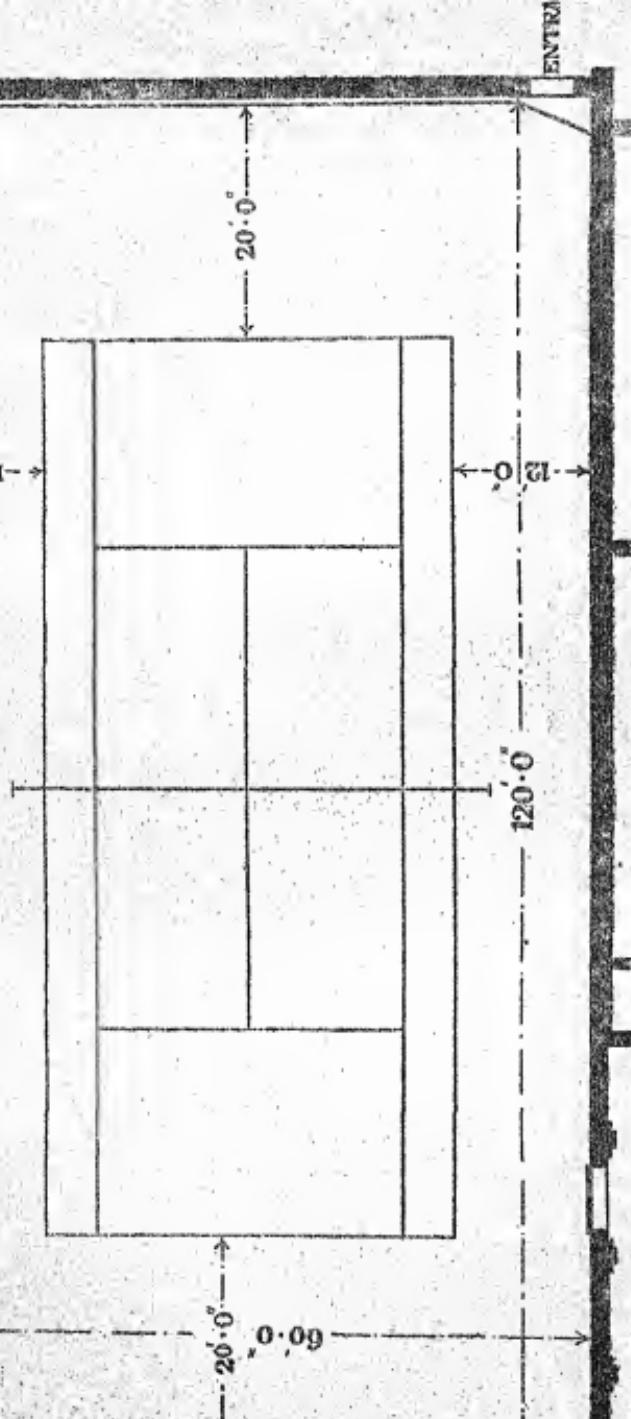
Courts for winter play, both covered and hard, loom so largely on the horizon of the modern lawn tennis player that they would have received separate treatment in this volume had not the manner of their making been exhaustively treated by thoroughly competent authorities at a comparatively recent date.<sup>1</sup> Plans, however, are given of the new covered court at Queen's Club, erected under the supervision of Mr. G. L. Orme in 1905—a court that in nearly every respect may be regarded as a model for the prospective owner of an indoor arena. Mr. Orme is of opinion that asphalt makes a dead floor and renders the bound of the ball unsatisfactory. My experiences of the indoor asphalt court at Lyons scarcely endorse this view. Tiring to the feet it may be, as Mr. Orme suggests, but so far as uniformity and elasticity went this particular surface, painted green, left nothing to be desired. After the hard sand courts on the Riviera I found the asphalt floor of Lyons more tractable than the oak floor at Auteuil, where, by the way, the run-back is inadequate and the timbered roof too low; and personally I would rather pass from grass to asphalt than from grass to wood. The first covered court in existence, that belonging to the old Maida Vale Club,<sup>2</sup> had

<sup>1</sup> See chapter on "Hard Courts and Covered Courts" in the Badminton volume; also directions in *Lawn Tennis*, by W. Baddeley.

<sup>2</sup> The Maida Vale court was replaced in 1885 by the Hyde Park Club court which was the scene of the Covered Court Championships for ten years and the nursery of many fine players. Its surface was made of parallel wooden boards 4 inches wide, laid on bearers 1 foot apart. This court is now used for cycle lessons and as a skating rink.

# PLAN OF THE NEW COURT AT QUEEN'S CLUB

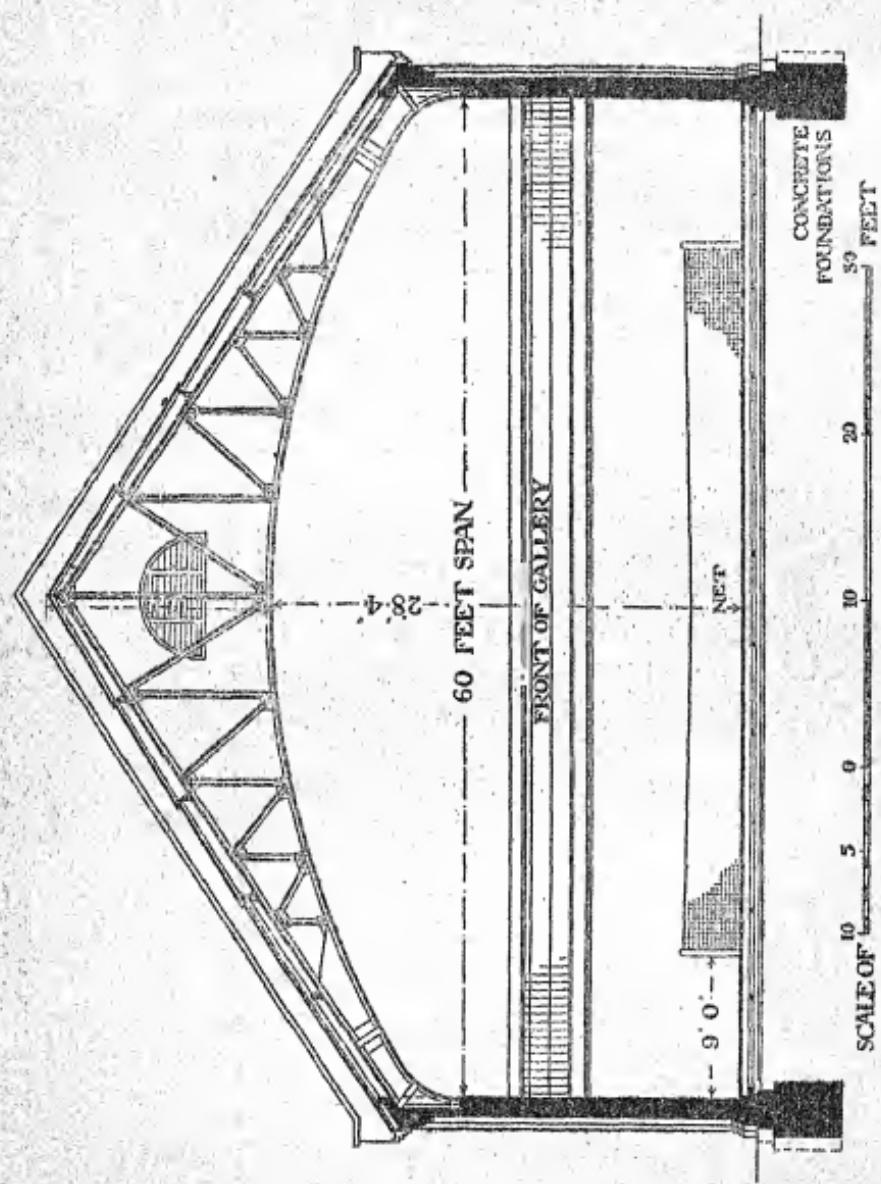
SCALE OF 10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 FEET



an asphalt floor which still elicits the praise of its former patrons. However, the weight of expert opinion is in favour of a well-laid wooden floor. It is affirmed that the jar to the feet is less while the bound of the ball more nearly resembles that on a hard and true turf surface, which, I take it, is the plane *par excellence* for lawn tennis.

Wood block is too dead, a fact proved when the old courts at Queen's Club were first laid. A few years ago they were relaid with boards of American maple 1 inch thick and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, put down on joists. These, again, are not altogether satisfactory. The boards have warped to a certain degree and consequently the floor is not quite true; further the nature of the stain has rendered them more slippery than is desirable. In the floor of the new court American white wood, also known as bass wood, has been employed, the boards being  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick and 4 inches wide, grooved and tongued and secret nailed, laid on 5-inch by 2-inch joists, 12 inches apart. This floor has been pronounced by the best players as eminently satisfactory. The floor is finished with oil stain of a green colour that makes a good surface; the bound of the ball has sufficient spring without being too fast. In America, by the way, canvas stretched tight over the floor area has been used with satisfactory results.

In regard to background for a covered court nothing is more effective than a green baize curtain 7 feet 6 inches high, hung the whole width of the end walls. Green in fact, here as outside, is the best colour for walls, natural or artificial. The run-back of a good covered court should be 20 feet



CROSS SECTION OF THE NEW COURT AT QUEEN'S CLUB

with a 12-feet margin at the sides—the old courts at Queen's have not quite so much. Mr. Orme believes that the best light is admitted through a glass roof and not through side windows. In Stockholm, where the building of covered courts has been zealously studied, the light at the Crown Prince's Club is admitted not through a glass roof which could not bear the weight of winter snow, but through a clear-story similar to that in a Gothic church, blinds being fixed to regulate the rays of the sun. When I was at Stockholm the weather did not provide the normal quantity of light and I was not able to sample this famous court under the best conditions, but I can well believe that the Swedish method under the circumstances is a sound one. If a glass roof is adopted, the glass should occupy about two-thirds of the area. The latest system of patent glazing is a great improvement on the old method of wooden bars with glass puttied in—the putty in time perished, admitting rain. In the modern glazing no putty is used; the glass fits into metal clips fashioned as to be impervious to water.

Spectators at Queen's are accommodated in galleries running round the walls; but I am inclined to think that both players and public are handicapped by this system—the players because their aim when taking overhead balls is apt to be diverted by the movements of the crowd and the public because, perched above the play, they cannot fully appreciate either its speed or its finer phases. With this view Mr. Orme agrees, his opinion being that the best arrangement would be tiers of seats

fixed on the ground at each side. At Stockholm there is an open "box" on one side of both courts, and since these are placed end-to-end and divided off by a substantial "organ loft," an excellent view of the play may be obtained from the floor. The spectator may have his choice of a bird's-eye or surface view, and the player is not disturbed. The Crown Prince's Club, by the way, is used at night, being equipped with hanging Swedish lamps. The powerful light from these is thrown up on huge umbrella-shaped shades which distribute it evenly over the whole court. Lawn tennis has also been pursued in some measure by artificial light in this country, but not with very satisfactory results. Experiments on an extensive basis are, I understand, now being prosecuted.

Roughly speaking, the cost of a covered court, built of brick walls, with a wooden floor and a glass roof such as I have described, the remaining portions of the latter being lead or slate, would be £2500. In this estimate the three principal features may be divided as follows: walls £1100, floor £400 and roof £1000. A court of which the walls are made of corrugated iron, with match-boarding inside, the roof being supported on iron stanchions, might be built for £1200.

## CHAPTER XV

### HOME TOURNAMENTS I HAVE VISITED

Effects of travelling—Respect to local feelings—Minor trials and tribulations—Round the Metropolitan meetings—The danger of too many tournaments—Memories of the Northern—A conception of *rus in urbe*—The “well idea” at Edgbaston—The boon of a clear Sunday—Some devices at Newcastle—The pseudonym considered—Recollections of Moffat and the Scottish championships—Fitzwilliam week—The pertinacity of the Yorkshireman—The Welsh championships—A full-dress rehearsal of Wimbledon—A holiday tour on the East Coast—Seaside meetings on the South Coast—Some impressions of Eastbourne

**W**IMBLEDON I have “covered” (as the news-editors say) in another chapter. Here I propose to unload a few recollections of some of the open meetings in Great Britain and Ireland at which it has been my privilege to appear as a humble competitor. The pleasures of a lawn tennis tournament are not entirely extracted from contests on the field of play. In addition, there are many engagements and diversions that tend to ease the labourer’s task and promote friendship and goodwill. Without such attributes a tennis week, however exhilarating the rallies might be, would lose the salt which adds flavour. Most zealous lawn tennis players go on tour at some time in their career, and those who have “carried

their bags" readily admit that a well-selected, not too exacting, round of holiday tournaments offers the very best medium for improving play and sampling the attractions of other cities and other citizens. Now that the motor car has become almost a vehicle of the people, it can be and often is utilised as a transport to the merry meeting grounds, or at least can be employed to annihilate the short distance that divides one tournament from the next. Quite recently a party of Midland players carried out a match tour by motor car and from reports that came to hand one gathered that railway trains will henceforward be voted obsolete by these pilgrims. It would be interesting to test the relative effects which a 40-H.P. Daimler, say, and an express train, both travelling at about the same rate, would exercise on the lawn tennis form of two players at the end of the journey. My own impression is (though my friend, A. F. Wilding, an intrepid motorcyclist, probably holds a different opinion) that the train-carried passenger would win. But coming to court on a rationally paced motor car is another matter; in this case the vision and the nerves are not subjected to a tension obviously bad. The motor-borne player has then nearly the best of everything.

During a season's tours up and down the country the lawn tennis player must be careful to pay proper respect to local feeling and must guard against offending the susceptibilities of those who not only sacrifice much of their time to promote the success of the meeting but often cater directly for the creature comforts of the visitor. I recall the case of one

competitor who apparently preferred the company of his own bag to that of a lady who had just served him with tea, when the latter's motor car was standing at the entrance gate to take them both home. Another player is reported to have borrowed a committee-man's heavy overcoat for an umpiring bout and kept it until it and he came boldly along next year! A pseudo-champion, once condescending to play with the president of the club in the handicap doubles, pleaded when the first round was called that he had sprained his elbow. Yet on the next day he was able to contest five matches in open events. I once met a competitor who openly accused the handicapper of favouring local committee-men because, quite properly, he was made to concede odds to two of them! I mention these well-founded instances not because they typify the habits and manners of tournament players as a body—that goes without saying—but to illustrate the degree to which uncouth behaviour at an open meeting may occasionally go; in short, to emphasize the responsibility which falls on every competitor to maintain the dignity and good name of the tennis community. Leave a good impression behind you not only of your style and methods in court but of your social bearing towards the "local people." That seems to me justifiable advice. Remember that in some districts the tournament is *the* week of the year, long anticipated and not soon forgotten. Your name may be in the mouth of every player in the district, anxiously waiting to see you perform. Let your personality subsequently be the subject for favourable comment.

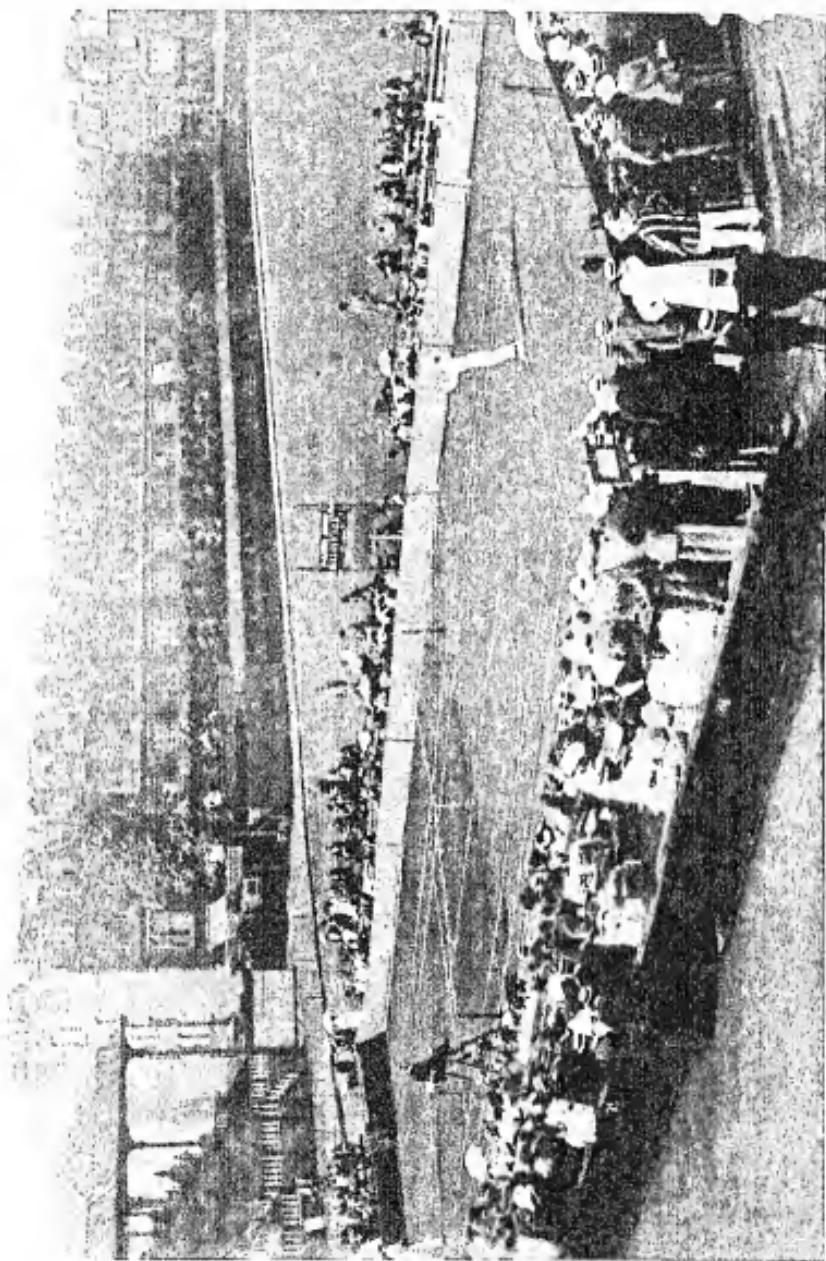
Causes for irritation and distraction apart from those on the court itself are bound to arise. There is the business telegram, generally timed by some evil agency to arrive the very moment we are stepping into court to contest an important tie. There is the late opponent, or, worse still, the late partner. There is the unwelcome discovery that the steel points which our conviction assured us had been carefully packed in brown paper in a corner of our bag have been left at home. A favourite racket takes it into its gutted head to snap one of its tendons just as we unscrew the press. A lady partner, hitherto immune from physical ailments, sprains her ankle in getting out of the train or falls off her bicycle and cuts her palm open. The groundman has forgotten to dry our only spare shirt. The lager beer is bad; the supply of viands runs short. We contract an attack of "cold feet" on hearing that our opponent has a fiendish breakaway service. It rains the moment we remove our blanket coat. There are a hundred and one small trials and tribulations sent, I doubt not, by an inscrutable Providence to test the spirit of the competitor. You will find, in lawn tennis as in other things, that the men (and women) who ride gaily and roughshod over the minor worries are the men (and women) who succeed. Some players are, of course, constitutionally more susceptible than others. But the more one considers these mental upheavals and their causes afterwards, the more is one convinced that their justification is not so real as it originally seemed and that their repression should be sternly encouraged if progress is to be made.

But we must paddle back from this backwater to

the main stream. There is now so much scope for the tournament competitor round London that, if he does not object to the daily survey of myriad chimneys through the window of a railway carriage and does not mind sometimes scrambling for a court and waiting until dark for an opponent, he can wield his racket at Metropolitan meetings from the last week in May to the last week in July. Beginning at suburban Surbiton he can end at urban Redhill, and in the interval he can have inspected the subterranean dressing-rooms at Chiswick Park, the choice and multi-coloured dresses of the ladies at Beckenham, the no less dazzling display of fashion at East Croydon, the undulating character of the courts at Watford, the aristocratic associations of Queen's, the perspiring efforts of the "five-o'clockers" at Gipsy and the side-shows at the Crystal Palace. These and other attractions, including the Wimbledon carnival to which all men's footsteps turn towards the end of June, are open to him. I have known players make the complete circuit of these London tournaments and sell shares or coal on 'Change in between. Imagine what this feat means—for it is a feat. Say half a dozen meetings are visited in succession, and no more than two hard matches are contested each day. This means that the business man, working at his office by the clock from ten to four, must be prepared to play twelve matches a week and over seventy matches in the prescribed period. Sometimes he may be required to play as many as three matches in one day, especially if he contrives to show himself early. A percentage of these may be, and often are, "rabbit-hunts"; but they involve time and exertion. A bout

of lawn tennis after business hours is a splendid tonic and nerve-bracer—there is none better—but I question the wisdom of competing without a break at all of these London gatherings. I feel certain the chances of a man being stale at Wimbledon or at the holiday tournaments are, if he does so, very great. With even more force does this reflection apply to ladies. They may not have business claims to settle—they are fortunate in that respect—but the majority of them have home ties, or I suspect they have, and one cannot believe, apart from this consideration, that a "rush-round" all the London meetings, with their attendant train journeys and possibly hurried or belated meals, is beneficial in the long run. Do not imagine I would wish to see any of the London tournaments discontinued. They are deservedly popular and most of them are well managed. They bring together men and women of different clubs and sometimes afford the only opportunity for the local player to meet other players. They provide a convenient excuse for the country cousin to visit London and for the London hostess to absorb the subtleties of tennis "shop." May they live long! And I hope the zealous competitors who boast that they have not missed a single meeting on the circuit will also attain longevity.

I have never yet been to Manchester without using an umbrella and I have never yet been lucky enough to see a dry court on the Northern Club's ground. They must have some fine days in Lancashire or they wouldn't need barometers—and I have vainly tapped many in this district. I recall tapping one so vigorously at the capacious mansion of Mr.



LONDON CHAMPIONSHIP AT QUEEN'S CLUB, 1905: BEALS WRIGHT V. N. E. BROOKES



Joseph Duckworth, my genial host at Heaton Mersey, that Norman Brookes, who was trying to telephone to Wilding at Sheffield, fancied something had got on the wires. Anent climatic vagaries, I remember that poor Harold Mahony, attempting to gain a foot-hold at one Northern meeting, removed his shoes and suffered his borrowed socks to slide about in the mud. Miss May Sutton too, not so long ago, soiled her pink ribbons and her season's record by trying to drive in what she described in her best Californese as a "cattle track." Of course Miss Sutton did not mean to impugn the quality of the Northern courts, nor do I—they are really very good *when* they are dry; and this meeting, one of the best managed in the country, certainly one of the best patronized by the public, has traditions and a fame which claim respect. County matches here have a status which they do not elsewhere enjoy—more perhaps is the pity—and the Lancashire team, when mobilized at full strength, is by no means to be despised. It was at Old Trafford that two of its leading members, X. E. Casdagli and S. E. Charlton, inflicted the first public defeat which Norman Brookes experienced in doubles in 1907. I can see the beaming faces of the local partisans now; it had temporarily stopped raining and the ropes and stands were thronged.

The Northern championships, like the golf championships, are movable feasts, but they journey in a fixed orbit—one year at Old Trafford, the next at Aigburth. It has been said that the equipment of the meeting is transported from Manchester to Liverpool and *vice versa* by means of the Ship Canal

and if this is so it may account for the black-speckled balls which biennially make their appearance on the Old Trafford courts! I suspect the real cause of new balls changing their colour like chameleons is the adjacent presence of a railway line notorious for its rich smoke! Aigburth is much the pleasanter of the two Northern grounds—spacious, open, even picturesque. It is sumptuously equipped with a county cricket pavilion (to which the luxury of a late dinner is added) and delightfully free from the smoke and dust of cities. Here Mr. B. C. Evelegh can survey from his tent a sward sedulously tended by the local groundmen, while the committee may assure themselves that, unless a succession of thunderstorms passes over the courts (as it has been known to do before now) their stands will be well filled throughout the week. It was at Liverpool that I first became sensitive of S. H. Smith's sterling capacity as a mixed double player in partnership with Miss E. W. Thomson.<sup>1</sup> This combination, working on the same lines, proved as successful as the Riseley-Smith coalition, Miss Thomson, as everyone knows, being a particularly nimble volleyer. S. H. Smith and F. L. Riseley for many years dominated the Northern meeting. Smith won the singles seven years in succession and the doubles with Riseley for five. The West of England pair may well pat each other's backs over their Northern exploits. The name of nearly every player of eminence is emblazoned on the Northern rolls. Here the All England Mixed Doubles Championship, first annexed by Ernest Renshaw and Mrs. Hillyard, came into being, remaining

<sup>1</sup> Now Mrs. Dudley Larcombe.

with varying fortunes ever since. For five years H. S. Mahony and the lady who is now Mrs. Sterry were invincible. Miss Lottie Dod and Miss Martin were among its shining lights for several years. Here, too, first Pim and then Wilfred Baddeley had each a four years' reign as champion.

I always like the Midland meeting at Edgbaston, chiefly because it realises one's conception of *rus in urbe*. A cab will take you from your Birmingham hotel to the entrance in twenty minutes unless your horse falls down the steep avenue which leads to the ground. And once there you might easily imagine you were miles away from the mainspring of Midland commerce. I have tried hard to discover a single chimney from the top of the terrace but have never succeeded. I hope I never shall. The courts here have been carefully laid with an eye to picturesque effect intensified by the natural beauties of this park-like district. Some are better than others; it would be too much to expect twenty courts used throughout the summer to be of the same quality. But they are all serviceable and the "gallery" surface is usually first-class. Here the "well idea," which renders the erection of unsightly stands unnecessary, has been carried out most efficaciously and the drainage being sound, there is no excretion of surface water. The pavilion is roomy and comfortable and has lately received the additional luxury of a glass-walled reading and writing-room, from which, dry and at ease, one can pity the poor fellows required by the exigencies of the programme to wage their battles in the rain. That hospitable appendage, the invitation tea tent, is also welcomed here, presided

Mr. A. E. Bainbridge, under the roof of whose beautiful mansion every champion of both sexes must at one time and another have stayed; the Youll family who have, *inter alia*, presented the thirty-guinea challenge cup for the open singles; Mr. F. H. Corder, who, sitting at the left hand of Mr. Eveleigh throughout the week, could probably qualify for a touring refereeship if he were not now grey in the service of the Northumberland Association; Mr. Ellwood Holmes whom I have previously mentioned, Mr. Wilfred Hall, Mr. R. N. Sutton, Mr. Myles Watson, Mr. A. W. White and others.

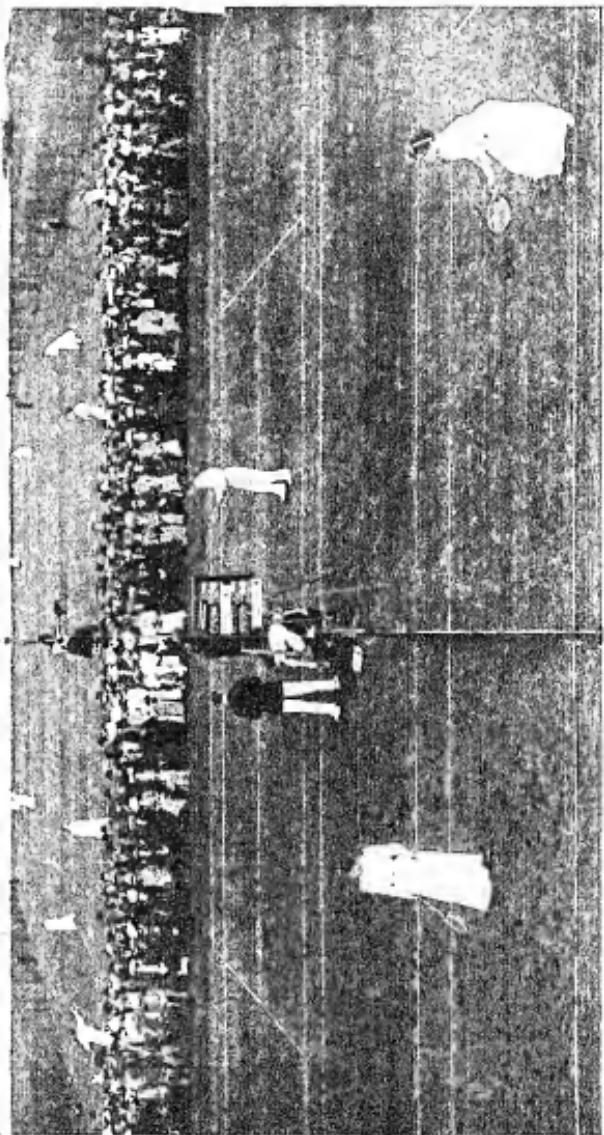
Going farther north is Moffat, the venue of the Scottish Championships, managed for some years by Mr. A. Wallace McGregor, a pillar of Scottish lawn tennis and a several-years' holder of the doubles title. I confess to no great liking for the Moffat courts or climate. My opinion may be coloured by the fact that I have sampled them only once, but there it is. I went to Moffat to be braced up, but as a tonic it proved immeasurably inferior to Buxton, my next point of call. F. W. Payn was at the Scottish Championships that year and won the title. I remember in the handicap doubles we played a fairly close match with Wiley Grant and Robert Leroy, the young Americans. I mention this match because I recollect that Mr. L. J. Grant, father of the aforesaid Wiley, was so anxious my partner should not be guilty of a foot-fault, the direst misdemeanour in the eyes of this zealous parent, that he not only posted himself opposite the line, crossing over as we crossed over, but buttonholed half a dozen other onlookers before we began and requested that

they too should critically gaze upon Payn's feet. It was Mr. Grant—I know he will forgive me for recalling these incidents—about whom a story may be told which shows him to be an almost idolatrous father. Wiley—I am not sure whether it was at Moffat or not but I think it was—had lost a match by the rim of his racket, and Mr. Grant had set his heart on his son winning it. So mournful was he over the reverse that throughout the evening he related to everybody who would lend him his ear the progress of the match, game by game, almost stroke by stroke. The pathetic note always came at the end and the phrase was never varied: "*Five* three, *forty* love and *Wiley* serving!" This testimonial to his son's serving capacity and his dismay at its fatal aberration tickled our fancies immensely—for the last sentence was always the same. I remember one practical joker—it was really rather rude—went round inviting all kinds of people, even waiters, to innocently approach Mr. Grant and crave details of Wiley's sensational defeat.

Though boasting a national championship, the Moffat meeting has rarely attracted a very large or a very representative entry; it is one of those tournaments where the man who receives the entry could make a safe book on the winners. But if the play itself is not exceptionally stern, the tournament has many independent attractions. There are several charming walks; the adjacent hydro, at which nearly all the players forgather, is a delightful rendezvous. Here is a capacious swimming bath much patronized by players after their matches, always "something going on" after dinner, and the food is Scotch and

wholesome. Can it be the porridge that keeps the good English lady players away? For some reason or other they have rarely revealed themselves at Moffat.

Fitzwilliam week! Its glories have faded since all Dublin society, in dresses that would have done credit to Ascot, gathered in Fitzwilliam Square, sometimes four thousand strong, to applaud the fierce rallies of Lawford and Renshaw, and later the no less captivating exhibitions of Hamilton, Pim, the Baddeleys, the Dohertys and other giants. The Irish championships in those days rivalled the Horse Show in popular attraction and in the harvest of gold they brought the hotel-keepers. Under Master (now Colonel) Courtenay's matchless control the tournament vied with Wimbledon as *the* meeting of the year. Irish hospitality was dispensed with regal liberality and every prominent English player brayed the billows of St. George's Channel with a fortitude inspired by habit. Alas! that a combination of circumstances should have caused this famous meeting to be now but a shadow of its former self. Even the battle-ground has been changed and the fashionable crowds have melted away. Happily signs of revived interest are now visible and Ireland may yet rear another band of players which shall challenge the picked men of England. Dublin at the present time can produce one or two players of conspicuous ability and given further intercourse with the best English exponents these should reach an even higher plane. The "Irish drive" is not a lost art yet, nor is Irish hospitality one smile less enticing. The Chaytors are still there to welcome the English invader, as I found and appreciated, and better sportsmen than J. F. Stokes, J. C.



2008. STERK

H. W. BROOKES

2008. STERK

FINALS OF THE NORTHERN CHAMPIONSHIPS, MANCHESTER, 1907

2008. STERK



Parke, H. N. Craig and T. D. Good, the leaders of the Irish brigade, one could not wish to meet.

Commend me to the Yorkshiremen for pertinacity on the tennis court. The county of broad shires may not breed champions whose skill repels the foreign invader and is the cynosure of all eyes at Wimbledon, but it produces hundreds of clubs the members of which are as tough and as enthusiastic as any players I have ever met. Leeds, Sheffield and Hull all have their complement of level-headed, indomitable votaries, possessing that timely virtue of extracting hopeless matches out of the fire and of now and then achieving remarkable success against opponents ranked in a higher class. One does not forget that the Yorkshire team recently won the county championship under circumstances which strikingly demonstrated their tough-hearted qualities and their capacity for effective combination. They are fortunate in possessing such a zealous and sanguine mentor as Mr. Clement Pflaum, the treasurer of the Yorkshire L.T.A., who in addition to "fathering" the county team keeps a watchful eye over promising recruits and is keenly on the alert at the Yorkshire trial matches. I have a great respect for Mr. Pflaum's organizing power, a signal illustration of which is annually furnished at that colossal August bank holiday tournament held at Ilkley, the Mecca of all Leeds players and of many others beside. At this moorland meeting—quite a feature of the season as regards the number of its entries and the spirit of fierce competition that prevails—as many as four hundred and fifty matches have been finished in three days, sixteen courts being employed. Almost as many players enter for the open singles here as at

Wimbledon and the man who would force his way through to the final stages must be prepared, practically speaking, to remain on court while the clock completes a circuit. The handicapping at Ilkley, a task involving the burning of many candles, is an object lesson in fairness, and the results testify to its remarkable accuracy. Here the brothers Watson are usually to the fore. Here, too, are several Yorkshire pairs capable of bagging a set from the elect. Scarborough I have not visited since one of the Baddeleys, a brother, I fancy, of the twins, won almost the last All England junior championship contested at this breezy spa. I remember the wind blowing a service back over the net and I think I saw H. S. Barlow smash a ball that bounced out of the ground. That must be fifteen years ago. The Yorkshire Association tournament is now held on different courts—courts that succeeded in drawing the Dohertys back to the provinces a couple of seasons back.

Whenever I have been to the Welsh championships<sup>1</sup> at Newport the weather has been so tropical as to make one turn, gratefully if guiltily, to the hot and cold "showers" thoughtfully provided in the pavilion. The courts here are as a rule very true and very well preserved and the management of the meeting displays a warm regard for the interest of the players and spectators. For nearly ten years the meeting witnessed a succession of triumphs for S. H. Smith, who has revelled in the hard, sun-baked surface, and for three years it welcomed the invincible Miss Sutton who closed her vigorous campaign at the

<sup>1</sup> Instituted first at Penarth, near Cardiff, June 14, 1886, under the patronage of Lord Windsor.

Welsh championships by bearing off the eighty-guinea challenge cup presented by the late Marquis of Bute. The fact that Smith and Miss Sutton appreciate a high bound testifies to the elasticity of the Newport courts. The fast surface also suits that fine forehand exponent, J. M. Boucher, who on the two occasions that Smith did not enter won the title. Not a graceful exponent, for no player could be who keeps his elbow and wrist so stiff, Boucher is the quintessence of accuracy and steadiness. His handicap record—I have seen him give almost impossible odds and survive—must nearly equal that of Ernest Renshaw. “I’ve drawn Boucher in the first round and may as well go home,” is not an uncommon expression in the dressing room at Newport.

Buxton to my mind has the best air of any place in England where tournaments are held, and were it not lugubriously associated in the minds of tourists with moist courts and dripping tents, would assuredly regain its former glory. The meeting takes place in the pleasure gardens, as at Leamington, and is the venue of the ladies’ doubles championship, won last year by Mrs. Hillyard and the late Miss C. Meyer. A terrific gale blew over the ground one year I was there, and the referees’ tent was only saved from utter destruction by the united efforts of players and officials. Leicester has great attractions for me. It is not a large meeting but the entry for the open events bristles with big names, and thanks to the interest displayed in it by Mr. and Mrs. George Hillyard, who “put up” a small army of “cracks” at Thorpe Satchville, the public are enabled to see almost a full-dress rehearsal of

Wimbledon. My friend, Harry S. Scrivener, pulls the strings at Leicester, and pulls them with commendable placidity and dignity. Indeed, so mindful are the committee of the value of his services that instead of sending him to a common hotel they provide a noble clubhouse in the centre of the town for his habitation at night. Scrivener is the lord of some thirty rooms for four days. Save for an odd servant or two he is alone in the building ; it requires the instinct of a bloodhound to track him down.

The East Coast provides a salubrious August holiday round, particularly serviceable to the player who seeks a brisk circuit with his racket rarely cased. He may begin at Saxmundham (near Aldeburgh), in the charming park belonging to Mr. W. E. Long, a fortnight's campaign that will take him subsequently to Colchester, where he must make due allowance for an inclined plane, and then on to Felixstowe, a popular if somewhat wind-swept tournament. The irrepressible Allens, with their inexhaustible fund of tittle-tattle, used to make this round regularly, and I can see the cherubic Charlie Allen sitting in the little parlour of the Bell Inn at Saxmundham inviting every player who passed the window to come in and celebrate the slaughter of the "rabbits." The addiction of the twins to a thirst-quencher after a hot day on the courts has yielded many stories. One of the best is that which depicts "E. R." entering a private bar and ordering his special concoction. Having consumed this potion with one pull "E. R." leaves the bar. "C. G.," as like his brother as one pea is to another, enters and

duly drinks his particular "refresher." The landlord naturally thinks both his customers are one and the same man, and his astonishment may be imagined when "E. R." comes back in a few minutes for a "repeat order"!

Almost every holiday resort that respects itself and seeks modern recognition now has its annual tournament. There are so many flourishing and enjoyable meetings on the South Coast, for example, that an intrepid channel swimmer wishing to visit them all need pay nothing in railway fares. Folkestone, Hythe, Eastbourne, Brighton, Shanklin, Falmouth are only some which have their weeks, and were the tourist gifted with the aquatic powers of Captain Webb he could swim across to Boulogne and Dieppe and there pursue his campaign. Brighton and Eastbourne are the climax of the season and the final muster at both seems each year to become more imposing and more unwieldy. About eight hundred matches were played on the county ground at Hove in the 1907 tournament, a record task even for the celebrated management of Mr. Eveleigh and Mr. Lionel King, and more than this total the following week at Eastbourne. Devonshire Park makes its appeal on a scale which includes guaranteed fine weather, a large and appreciative gallery, musical accompaniments, a hundred outdoor tea-tables, evening concerts and fireworks. The lists here bring together young and old in motley profusion. Eastbourne is the only tournament save Wimbledon (where there are no handicap events) that habitually runs over into the second week. The wily veteran is much in evidence, never so quietly effective as

when tackling a young blood who strolls up in a loud blazer and casts a half-contemptuous, half-joyful look at the grey hairs. To Eastbourne also comes in ever-increasing numbers the young lady who has made a hit at her suburban club and who has been given to understand by her friends that a couple of seasons only divides her from the championship at Wimbledon. Disillusionment may follow after an early exit from the handicap events or it may be temporarily delayed until some opponent of ten years' experience of tournaments, conceding half-thirty and owing as much, gently crushes the aspirant, as she herself was crushed a decade before. There is nothing like an open prize meeting to reveal the fact that proficiency and honours at lawn tennis can only be purchased after a long and arduous apprenticeship.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE STORY OF THE DAVIS CUP (1900-1903)

The symbol of international supremacy—Why the first British team failed—Roper Barrett gives his impressions and offers some criticisms—Englishmen taken on the flank—Ward and Davis create a sensation at Wimbledon—The Dohertys and Dr. Pim go to America—Comments on Dr. Pim's selection for the internationals—The States team triumphs at Bay Ridge—Ten thousand spectators watch a single combat—Dohertys demonstrate their invincible skill in the doubles—The screw service and its effects—"R. F." reaches the challenge round at Newport—England challenges again and the Dohertys "sweep the board"—Another unexpected situation for Mr. Collins—How the issue hung in the balance at Longwood—The Cup finally lifted—An American appreciation of "H. L."

THE story of the Dwight Davis Challenge Cup Competition is a rich record of international rivalry, patriotic fervour and strenuous endeavour. The massive solid silver punch-bowl lined with gold, valued at about £200 and presented by Mr. Dwight F. Davis of St. Louis, bears a relationship to lawn tennis somewhat akin to that of the America Cup and yachting. And so far as public interest in America is concerned the fight for this trophy, symbol of international supremacy, has aroused as much excitement and attracted as many onlookers as the struggles of British and American racing craft off Sandy Hook. We may even draw a more specific

analogy between these two contests. Both have sprung from American enterprise and from the inherent desire of Americans to assert their supremacy in every branch of sport. Both are governed by hard and fast regulations which, though they have never impaired the cordial relations of the rival authorities, have yielded a demand for modification or adjustment. Both, on the days of actual conflict, have been influenced in result by the vagaries of the weather and by conditions peculiar to the scene of action ; and both have brought out the distinctively constructive methods, as well as the sporting temperaments, of the two countries. At first sight the maritime passage of a wind-propelled yacht may appear to have little or nothing in common with the human-projected flight of a tennis ball on a lawn. Yet the successful issue of the first depends largely on human effort—on the skilful handling of the wheel, the care of the canvas, the training and control of the crew, and a complete knowledge of the course. If we substitute a racket for the wheel, regard the crew as human muscles and the course as confined within the limits of a court, the comparison becomes more intelligible.

But there is this great difference between the contests for the Davis Cup<sup>1</sup> and the America Cup. Many valiant efforts have been made by this country to gain the blue riband of yachting. These have not yet been crowned with success ; the theatre of war still remains American waters. For three years the lawn tennis players in the States victoriously defended

<sup>1</sup> For historical data respecting the inception of the International Competition, see Appendix.

the Davis Cup against the attack of the invader—not always a well-balanced attack, let me add. But in 1903 the superior skill, greater consistency and wonderful tenacity of the British team prevailed—the trophy was exported for the first time to British soil. Three more years, and though the field widened and challengers came from the Continent and even from distant Colonies, the custody of that cup was safeguarded. The Dohertys had captured it; they were its trusty defenders. But in 1907, a bad year for England's sporting prestige and one in which neither the Dohertys nor S. H. Smith and Frank Roseley were available for home service, the Davis Cup exhibited further globe-trotting tendencies, and as the result of a brilliant campaign by Norman Brookes the Australian and Anthony Wilding the New Zealander, set off on a long journey to the uttermost ends of the earth. Happily its destination was a Commonwealth linked to us by Imperial ties. The Davis Cup is still a family possession, despatched across the seas as tangible proof of our sons' prowess. That it will come back sooner or later to the Mother-land, untarnished by its sojourn abroad, we may confidently predict.

There can be little question that the first British team that went over in 1900 to challenge for the Davis Cup suffered from several disadvantages. For one thing, it lacked the administrative assistance and paternal influence of a non-playing manager. It was new to the climatic conditions of America; the tour was strictly limited, and its members had no time to feel their feet on American soil. The conditions of play were likewise novel and in some measure primitive.

Perhaps our team had underestimated the strength and skill of their opponents. Certainly they were repulsed in a manner which suggested, even if it did not proclaim, their inferiority, while the confidence of the British authorities seemed scarcely justified. But let me interpolate here the interesting and untoned impression of this, the pioneer tour of an official British team, kindly supplied for this volume by Mr. H. Roper Barrett, one of its three members :

" After many disappointments<sup>1</sup> the team that actually set sail was Arthur Wentworth Gore, Ernest D. Black and Herbert Roper Barrett — poetically referred to in the official organ as 'The Dauntless Three.' The *Campania* landed us at New York on a Saturday morning. Here we were met and welcomed by Mr. Stevens' (he was an American player of those days) man. We appreciated Mr. Stevens' kindness in sending down his man; it seemed so friendly and kind and much better than coming himself. Having had no particular facilities offered us for practice, it was unanimously decided, Gore being in the chair, that we should forthwith visit Niagara. Accordingly on the same night we took train and went right through to Buffalo, where we saw the wonderful Falls, crossed over to Canada and subsequently went beneath them. The Falls 'beggar description'; it is impossible to describe their grandeur and power and, as you know, I am no poet. Let that go. We saw many hundred thousand tons of water rushing over the Fall each minute and throwing up spray three or four hundred

<sup>1</sup> The Dohertys and several other leading players were unable to accept the invitation of the L.T.A.

feet above the level of the land, the sun meantime forming beautiful rainbows. Well, having inspected this bewildering sight and the awful whirlpool where Captain Webb tempted Providence once too often, we journeyed back to Boston. Here we were heartily welcomed by Palmer Presbrey, M. D. Whitman, Leo Ware, James Dwight, Leyman, A. Codman and many others famous in the lawn tennis world of America. Palmer Presbrey looked after us right royally, made us members of all the leading clubs and had us put up at the University Club. I should like to express our special appreciation of the unremitting attention we received from Palmer Presbrey and James Dwight, and particularly to mention the farewell dinner they gave us at the Somerset Club on leaving Boston, with Mr. Leyman in the chair.

"Now as to conditions of play at Longwood, the venue of the international matches. The ground was abominable. The grass was long. Picture to yourself a court in England where the grass has been the longest you ever encountered; double the length of that grass and you have the courts as they were at Longwood at that time. The net was a disgrace to civilised lawn tennis, held up by guy ropes which were continually sagging, giving way as much as 2 or 3 inches every few games and frequently requiring adjustment. As for the balls, I hardly like to mention them. They were awful—soft and *motherly-looking*—and when served with the American twist came at you like an animated egg-plum. I do not exaggerate. Neither Beals Wright nor Holcombe Ward nor Karl Behr can make the balls used at Wimbledon break as much as

these did. They not only swerved in the air, but in hitting the ground broke surely four to five feet. Our team was altogether taken at a disadvantage. We had never experienced this service before and it quite nonplussed us. The spectators were most impartial and the female portion thereof not at all unpleasant to gaze upon." (This last sentence may explain something.) Mr. Barrett proceeds:

"M. D. Whitman, Dwight Davis and Holcombe Ward were a fine team, certainly the best America ever had. Taking into consideration the adverse conditions under which we played (the thermometer was 136° Fahr. in the sun—a dry heat) I do not think we did so badly.<sup>1</sup> The umpires (who sat on chairs perched on tables) and the linesmen discharged their duties most satisfactorily. Indeed, we had nothing to complain about in regard to American sportsmanship and hospitality.

"Personally I had to catch the *Campania* back to Liverpool on the next Saturday. I was only in America a week, and I often laugh to myself over the fact that I journeyed some 6800 miles to play thirty games.<sup>2</sup> Still I do not grumble. There was no one else to represent England and I felt I had to go despite the inconvenience and personal expense to which we were put.

"Whitman, let me conclude, was one of the finest

<sup>1</sup> America won by 3 matches to nil, 10 sets to one (won by Black against Davis) and 76 games to 50. Rain interrupted the last day's play which was never completed.

<sup>2</sup> Davis and Ward beat Black and Barrett 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

single players I ever saw, but I think Gore was a match for Davis."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Barrett's outspoken criticisms of the playing conditions at Longwood are doubtless justified; these must have seriously militated against the chances of the British team which had been familiar to up-to-date English accessories. But I do not think that even on perfect courts with perfect nets and in a more normal temperature the Englishmen would have triumphed. Nor do I gather that Mr. Barrett holds any other opinion. The American writer<sup>2</sup> who said that "it will always remain a mystery why the English players should not have had some inkling of what they had to expect" was not referring to the conditions, though he might have been, but to the American service. "The Englishmen," this chronicler goes on, "were taken on the flank and utterly routed. To those across the water it was some consolation to know the three players who represented Great Britain, good as they were, were not the three best men possible to send over." Possibly they may not have been, but that reflection does not absolve the L.T.A. from a charge of over-confidence or relieve them from a share in the defeat. The truth is, probably, that estimations of American form were based on the results of an unofficial tour made by Dr. Eaves, H. A. Nisbet and H. S. Mahony through the States in 1897. At Newport Nisbet beat both Whitman and Larned, while Dr. Eaves, defeating Nisbet in the final, came within a few points of

<sup>1</sup> A thunderstorm stopped the tie between Gore and Davis. Davis won the first set 9-7; the second was drawn at 9-9.

<sup>2</sup> F. S. Mansfield in the *Boston Globe*, August 4, 1902.

winning the American championship. But in the intervening three years American players had made great strides. Apart from their service, which they developed with much enterprise and conspicuous success, the players in the States were adding new strokes to their repertoire each season. Commenting on their progress, the late H. S. Mahony observed about this time: "The Americans dart in and kill many a volley which an English player would either let drop, half-volley or volley very weakly. Of their ground-play, especially on the forehand, there is nothing to be said but praise, and those who saw Larned's beautiful ground-strokes in this country will thoroughly endorse this opinion."

In 1901, anxious to re-establish the supremacy which it was felt the result of the first conflict had impaired, the English Association challenged again and visions of an early revenge began to float before the eyes of English players. But this dream had to be postponed. No team whose chances of success might have been considered superior to those of the 1900 combination could be raised, and it was wisely decided to wait another year. Obviously the desire of the Association was to pit the invincible skill of the Doherty brothers against the American holders; it was therefore necessary to await the convenience of the champions. The wisdom of this course was proved by the remarkable success which attended the visit to Wimbledon of the American doubles champions, Holcombe Ward and Dwight Davis, in the summer of 1901. Not until this redoubtable pair served, smashed and lobbed their way through to the challenge round did the average Englishman

appreciate the real potency of their game, nor give Black, Gore and Barrett their righteous due. Even in the challenge round itself, when only the potential resistance of the Dohertys divided the invaders from the championship, the extraordinary powers of Ward and Davis and the efficacy of American methods were so far demonstrated that had not rain cut the match short on the first day the visitors might have triumphed. As it was, the Dohertys were tested to the utmost to save their titles on the following day.<sup>1</sup> A team more aggressive and synergetic had never been seen in the centre court of Wimbledon.

It is no exaggeration to say that when R. F. and H. L. Doherty, Dr. Joshua Pim and "Captain" W. H. Collins were selected to take up the second challenge for the Davis Cup, every player in this country proudly pictured the trophy coming back with the team. This confidence was justified; why it was not fulfilled we shall presently discover.

When one considers that the British travellers were going to exhibit their prowess before the assembled gaze of 10,000 spectators in New York, it is remarkable—indeed an indication of newspaper apathy in regard to lawn tennis at that time—that the party should have slipped out of England unattended by even the faintest trumpeting in the daily press. It is true one paper sent its representative to Euston to interview the champions, but the result when published was so obviously lacking in illumination as to be practically worthless—it seems to have

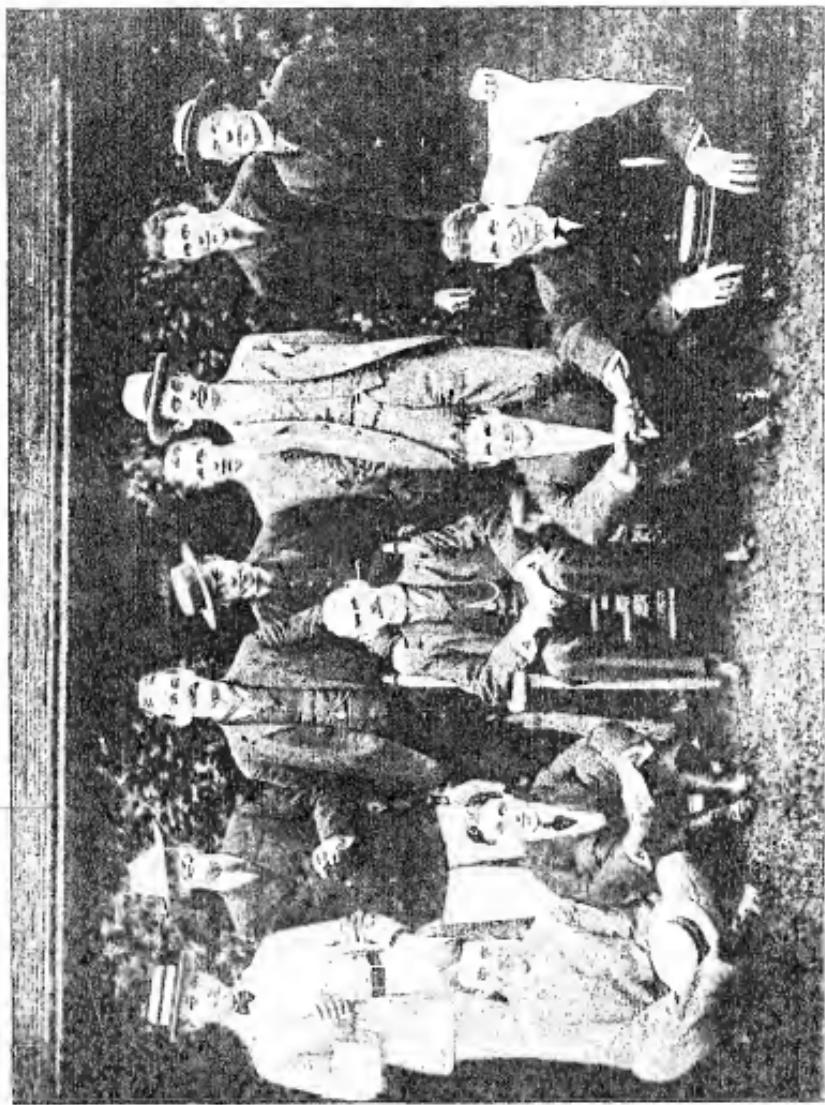
<sup>1</sup> When rain stopped play on the first day both sides had won a set and were "games all" in the third. The match was entirely replayed on the morrow, when the Dohertys won.

provoked great hilarity on the other side. Perhaps there was some desire on the part of the tourists themselves to "lie low," for the medical member of the team (who sailed a week later) was mysteriously referred to as "Mr. X" and "A Famous Player" and seems indeed to have left these shores rather in the character of a stowaway than as a champion whose name was a household word on every tennis lawn. Doubtless there were sound professional reasons for this secrecy, but it must be recorded that the voracious journalists on the other side scarcely tasted "Mr. X" while greedily swallowing Dr. Pim.

With a view to winning the Eastern Doubles and thus gaining a passport to Newport,<sup>1</sup> the team went through at once to Boston and after enjoying a trip to Nahant on Mr. Charles Hayden's yacht immediately began operations on the Longwood courts. The British players seemed to have impressed themselves most favourably on the spectators. The Dohertys' appearance in court was described as "very pleasing."<sup>2</sup> "Wearing the light blue colours of Cambridge University and attired in white clothes they contrasted favourably with the grotesque and dishevelled appearance of some of the American players." As the brothers' only object in competing at Longwood (apart from their desire to win the Eastern Doubles which they fulfilled) was to gain practice in singles, "H. L." retired after winning three rounds comfortably, "R. F." a little earlier.

<sup>1</sup> The winners of the Eastern and Western Doubles meet at Newport to decide which shall challenge the holders of the Doubles Championship. In 1907 the Southern champions were also admitted to this final eliminating contest.

<sup>2</sup> *Boston Globe*, August 4, 1902.



Back Row: — — — — — — —  
Front Row: H. WAKI H. L. DOHERTY

PALMER PRESHEW W. H. COLLINS

E. HORTON R. F. DOHERTY

A. COOMAN C. HAYDEN  
DREIGHT F. DAVIS

THE DOHERTYS IN AMERICA, 1902: GROUP TAKEN AT NAHANT, NEAR BOSTON, SOON AFTER ARRIVAL



Had they not done so, as Mr. Collins points out,<sup>1</sup> "they might, one or the other of them, have had to play two hard matches on both Friday and Saturday, or have been compelled to retire in the final round of the singles. "What the press will have to say to-morrow," wrote the English captain in his diary, "is none of our business." As a matter of fact the press only wrote nice things. "The decision to withdraw," said one of the leading dailies,<sup>2</sup> "can in no wise be criticised. The Dohertys availed themselves of an opportunity to become accustomed to the American style of playing and to acquire a familiarity with American turf and balls. Nobody should question the propriety of their withdrawing if it seems policy to do so."

It is interesting to note, in view of the criticisms levelled against the Longwood courts by the first British team, that Mr. Collins stated at a complimentary dinner<sup>3</sup> before leaving Boston that he considered the differences in conditions of play in America and England so slight "that any player could get accustomed to them with two days' practice"; while the Dohertys themselves admitted<sup>4</sup> that the "American conditions, except for the great heat, are quite up to ours; and we could not wish to have better courts than those at Brookline near Boston." Doubtless there had been great improvement in the two years.

There can be little question that when the Dohertys, now joined by Dr. Pim, arrived at Bay Ridge to contest the international matches, they were fairly confident of winning the Davis Cup at the first

<sup>1</sup> Report to the L.T.A.

<sup>2</sup> *Boston Globe*, July 30, 1902.

<sup>3</sup> Held at the County Club, Brookline, August 2, 1902.

<sup>4</sup> *R. F. and H. L. Doherty on Lawn Tennis*.

time of asking. Their achievements at Longwood, slight as they were, included victories over both Larned and Ware and the brothers Wrenn in the doubles, each with the loss of only one set. It is true neither had yet met Whitman in a single, but both had met and defeated players who employed Whitman's service and most of his methods. As to Ward and Davis, the Dohertys had vanquished them at Wimbledon a year ago. Among Americans, however, there was a feeling of quiet confidence. "The visitors," we are told,<sup>1</sup> "decline to express any opinion on the outcome, but seem to be very confident under the surface. Their experience in Longwood helped this feeling immensely. Captain Collins declared yesterday that every condition was satisfactory to himself and his men. He had tested the American balls and found them very similar to the English and apparently quite as good. The turf suited him and he said all three of his men were in excellent condition."

Now we come to a question of policy on the part of the British captain that subsequently evoked much comment on both sides of the Atlantic. Mr. Collins nominated R. F. Doherty and Dr. Pim for the four singles and the brothers Doherty for the one doubles tie. "People are constantly asking me," said Mr. Collins subsequently,<sup>2</sup> "why the 'doctor' was chosen instead of H. L. Doherty. They don't seem to realise that the Americans had fresh men for the doubles and that sometimes in America it is hot. If H. L. Doherty had played on the Wednesday and Thursday in the singles, and the weather had not

<sup>1</sup> *New York Sun*, August 5, 1902.

<sup>2</sup> Interview in *Lawn Tennis*, September 10, 1902.

been as it was, propitious, he might have been a rag on the Friday. Apart from that, the 'Doctor' was playing extremely well in practice against the Dohertys and we saw no reason *before the match* that he would not show the Americans some of his old quality. He was never in better training in his life, I should say. I don't even think he was over-trained, although he had taken off more than two stone in six weeks." I give this explanation in justice to Mr. Collins who has proved himself an efficient and generally a far-sighted captain; but I am bound to add that the net result<sup>1</sup> of the international matches at Bay Ridge makes it now clear that the British captain would have been better advised had he left the brunt of the attack entirely in the hands of the Dohertys, as he did in 1903. The chances, it seems to me, were two to one in favour of "H. L." playing. There were four singles and only one double. Pim's responsibility was therefore just double as much as the younger Doherty's and his pre-eminent standard twice as important. Only a month previously "H. L." had become champion of England, and he had won the championship of Ireland the same year. Pim had been champion eight years previously; for some years he had been out of the tournament arena. Even the American journals expressed surprise at the selection. A shrewd judge<sup>2</sup> of the game wrote: "Had the challenging side eliminated Dr. Pim and played only the brothers Doherty, it is easily conceivable they

<sup>1</sup> America won three of the four singles, Pim only winning one set in the seven he contested.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Henshaw in *Brooklyn Life*, August 16, 1902.

might have won two of the four single matches as well as the doubles. Certainly Dr. Pim must be omitted from any critical analysis. He was simply a first-class man badly out of practice and the only cause for wonder is that, after his long retirement and without adequate preparation he should have been chosen to represent the English Association in such a contest. Seemingly the only rational explanation would be that Dr. Pim in any form was thought to be a better third choice than any English player now in active competition, which would tend to confirm the oft-repeated assertion of English critics that the British game has retrograded." This excerpt suggests that Dr. Pim, though outplayed, was not outclassed. Seven years earlier when on tour in the States, it may be noted, he was regarded as half-fifteen better than any American player. Mr. Collins, perhaps, had much to justify his action.

The matches themselves created immense interest. Over 5000 people watched the play on the first day, over 6000 on the second and the doubles tie, when the Dohertys beat Ward and Davis,<sup>1</sup> actually attracted a crowd of 10,000—the largest assembly that ever watched a lawn tennis match. The conditions were perfect.<sup>2</sup> R. F. Doherty was decidedly unlucky in having to finish his tie with Larned, postponed overnight on account of rain, in the morning and play Whitman the same afternoon. Though this arrangement was unanimously agreed upon,<sup>3</sup> "R. F." was perhaps justified in subsequently remarking to me, "Whitman was fresh and I was not. I beat him

<sup>1</sup> The score was 3-6, 10-8, 6-3, 6-4.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Collins in his official report.

at Newport afterwards in the final of the American championship. It is a fair assumption I should have beaten him at Bay Ridge if I had not had the morning's strain and excitement." As for the tactics pursued in this match we are told<sup>1</sup> that "R. F." continued to battle for the net in the American fashion and though beaten in three straight sets made a much better stand than was at first anticipated. "It is certain that R. F. Doherty owed his success against Larned to his recognition of the futility of English tactics, and it is at least safe to say that he will be stronger in the singles game when he leaves this country." It was in the doubles that the brothers convincingly demonstrated their superlative skill. This was probably the most remarkable doubles contest ever seen. Davis and Ward, the most spectacular team in lawn tennis annals, after playing in invincible style for nearly two sets, were gradually worn down and beaten out by the most heartbreaking precision and certainty of return. The crowds filed out from the beautiful grounds of the Crescent Athletic Club still under the spell of the great tennis they had witnessed and tried simultaneously to climb on one lone car of the Fort Hamilton line which had been thoughtfully provided by the trolley authorities to carry 6000 people back to town.<sup>2</sup> Dwight Davis, the donor of the cup, appears to have been the pivot upon which the whole match turned; he it was who nearly won victory and who finally earned defeat. A whirlwind at first, his terrific smashing and twist service almost demoralised the Englishman. He held himself in

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Herbert Henshaw.

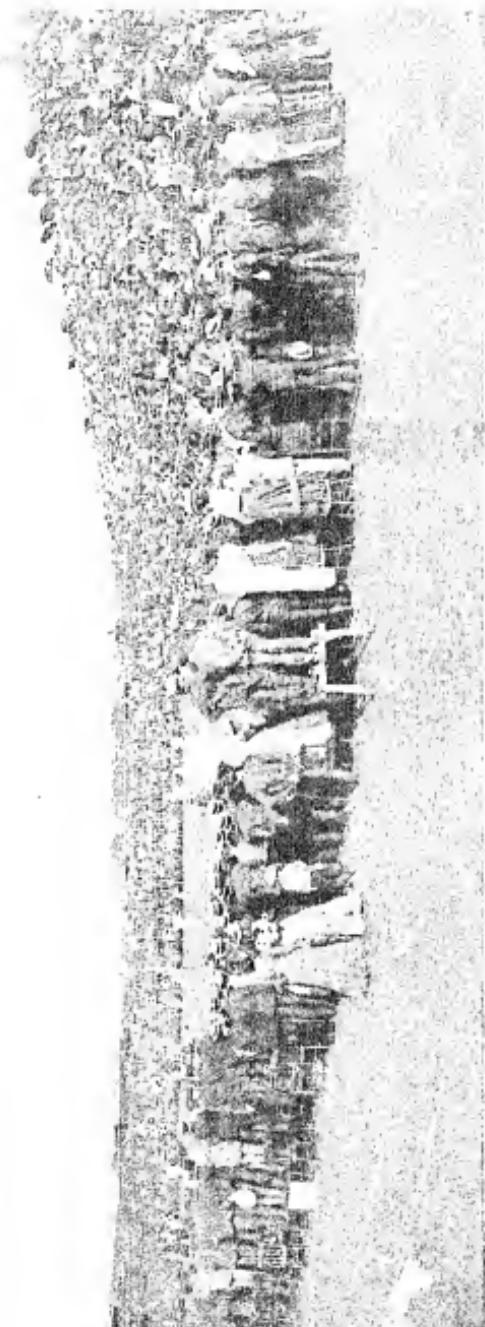
<sup>2</sup> *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*.

check a good deal in handling deep lots and did not sacrifice points in attempting to kill those balls which other men volley with less speed; but towards the finish he missed many sharp volleys and low shots—his "kills" missed fire. Ward was a marvel of steadiness, but he was evidently less feared on the other side of the net than his partner, for even when Davis was palpably tiring in the second set the Dohertys lobbed more to Ward than to Davis. "Ward worked like a beaver to stem the tide."<sup>1</sup> "H. L." seems to have handled the Americans' screw service with less embarrassment than "R. F." and during the rallies was the "wheel-horse doing the lion's share of the work." He was very certain in all his strokes, but his return of the service was his best point. "R. F." made nearly all of the killing strokes and also more errors. There seems to be little doubt that in gaining this memorable victory the Dohertys used more of the American style of play than any foreign team that had previously crossed the Atlantic.

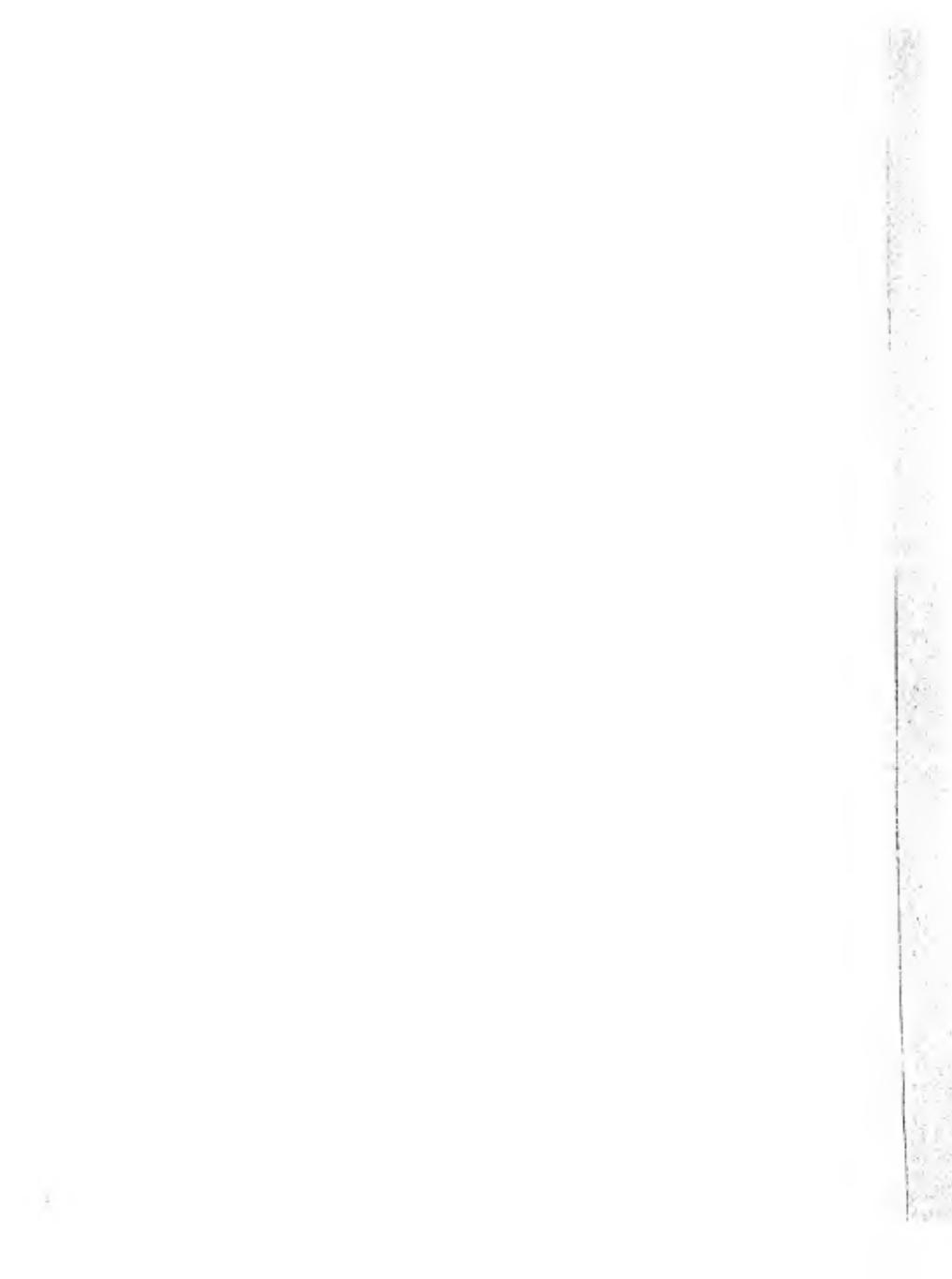
I have only space for a brief mention of the Dohertys' subsequent visit to Newport, the venue of the American championships. Fortified by what had happened at Bay Ridge, Americans were fairly confident of retaining the singles title which Dr. Eaves had so nearly captured five years earlier; but to strengthen assurance M. D. Whitman, the idol of home players, was induced to re-enter the championship arena,<sup>2</sup> and safeguard the honour of the States.

<sup>1</sup> *New York Sun.*

<sup>2</sup> Whitman resigned the championship in 1900 having won it for three successive years. He had since practically retired from the game.



TEN THOUSAND SPECTATORS WATCHING THE DOHERTY'S PLAN DAVIS AND WARD IN THE INTERNATIONAL BOULES  
AT THE CRESCENT ATHLETIC CLUB, NEW YORK, AUGUST, 1902



The doubles were considered to be visibly moving towards England. As it happened, American anticipations were realised, but it was not "invincible" Whitman who proved to be the saviour of his country. Of the eighty-three competitions in the singles, R. F. Doherty and Whitman duly reached the final.<sup>1</sup> The Englishman, playing magnificent tennis, defeated the pride of America with comparative ease. When "R. F." faced Larned, the holder, in the challenge round the heat—to quote a remark subsequently made to me by Doherty—was so intense "that the linen collars of the spectators were reduced to pulp." The Englishman struggled bravely but ineffectually, and the more acclimatised holder triumphed with the loss of one set in four.<sup>2</sup> Thus the results at Bay Ridge were exactly reversed. There "R. F." beat Larned and fell to Whitman; at Newport it was the other way round. In the doubles the brothers again achieved a notable victory, and by defeating Ward and Davis in the challenge round not only proclaimed their superiority in the four-handed game but exported the title to England for the first time in its history.<sup>3</sup>

That England would challenge again next year for the Cup was certain, while another safe assumption was that H. L. Doherty, unbeaten in any match in America, would support his brother exclusively in both singles and doubles. With the doubles almost

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pim was beaten in the fourth round by L. E. Ware on the day of his departure. "H. L." scratched to his brother in the semi-final.

<sup>2</sup> Americans admit that the English challenger was handicapped by the heat.

<sup>3</sup> The Dohertys won 11-9, 12-10, 6-4. They lost only one service each; Ward lost two, Davis three.

a victory in hand, it would go hard with England if the brothers could not each win a singles tie and thus secure the rubber. That this anticipation was not only realised but that the Dohertys made a clean sweep of all the American honours, international and national, history now bears witness. In fact, the brothers' tour of 1903 was a triumphant progress from beginning to end. Their *coup d'essai* the previous year may have failed; their *coup de grâce* lacked neither conclusiveness nor dramatic effect. Whitman, now finally retired, did not play for America, nor were Davis and Ward available for the doubles; but Larned, the hero of Newport, was in the defending team, as sound and forceful as ever, while the Wrenn brothers, one of whom took Whitman's place in the singles, were justly considered to be quite as powerful a combination as the thrice-crowned doubles champions, in fact more "heady" and more reliable. But the Englishmen, familiar now with American conditions, undismayed by the American service and with their tactical campaign carefully planned and as carefully rehearsed, were masters of the situation. Both at Longwood (the scene of the 1900 international matches when England was outclassed) and at Newport, where "H. L." gained the laurel wreath which "R. F." had so nearly worn the year before, the brothers proved themselves to be the greatest and most natural exponents of the game the world had ever seen. Surely the American achievements of the Dohertys in 1903 must stand out as the brightest feature of their dazzling career. Whenever I hear this or that admirer urging the superior claims of another player, either of the

past or the present generation, I invariably recite to the doubting Thomas the record of this marvellous tour. Not a record, mark you, of figures alone—indeed some of the victories were more dearly bought than those of the previous year—but a record of courageous zeal, of difficulties surmounted, of unemotional confidence, and of absolute indifference to the state of the weather and the size and temper of the crowd.

On this victorious trip the Dohertys were again accompanied by Mr. W. H. Collins as captain. I see that in some of the American newspapers—which, by the way, gave remarkable prominence to these matches—Mr. Collins is described as “trainer.” Though its English meaning rather suggests a man waiting in the pavilion with a rough towel, the title is not misplaced: Mr. Collins *did* train his team, physically, morally and mentally. He studied their every comfort, arranged every travelling detail, kept a watchful eye over their meals and despatched them early to bed. I’m not sure he didn’t act as chaperon at the many social functions which the brothers attended. This genial amateur “trainer” had more than one unexpected situation to face. Two days before the first international ties began, R. F. Doherty complained of pain in his playing arm. To quote Mr. Collins:<sup>1</sup> “He said that he felt something go wrong in his doubles match the day before,<sup>2</sup> but as a similar feeling had previously occurred, he did not think anything of it at the time. He made no further mention of it until Monday morning when he said that his arm was troubling him

<sup>1</sup> Official Report to L.T.A.

<sup>2</sup> At an invitation tournament at Nahant, partnered by H. S. Mahony.

again. I immediately telephoned for Dr. F. H. Whipple, who had helped us out of our former troubles, and he arrived at 9 a.m. He could not find any trace of serious trouble, but gave instructions as to treatment and returned at 2.30 p.m. and treated the sprain for three-quarters of an hour. Later in the afternoon the Dohertys had a knock-up and "R. F." found pain in playing his backhand or forehand, if the stroke necessitated a long reach. Overhead there was no pain to speak of. Dr. Whipple saw him again at 7 p.m. and thought that the practice had done him no harm. He came again at 10.20 p.m. and fixed up the arm for the night." With such tender care are international tennis champions treated. On the next morning the doctor gave his decision and it was against "R. F." and England. There would be great risk in playing that day; in fact if he did play he might be *hors de combat* for several weeks. On the other hand, if he rested his arm for twenty-four hours he might possibly be fit on the morrow, and there was "a very fair chance" of his being able to play on Thursday. The medical certificate stated that "R. F." was suffering from a strain of the deltoid muscle of the right shoulder and probably of capsular ligament. Now came Mr. Collins' problem. H. S. Mahony had come over with the Dohertys as reserve man, it being distinctly understood that he only played in the event of either of the brothers being incapacitated. That contingency had arisen, but the English captain was naturally reluctant to risk the chances of the whole team and tour by substituting the Irishman. Could Mahony play in one single and not in the other? Mr. Collins thought he could, basing his contention on

Regulation 11<sup>1</sup> which allowed one player to be substituted for another in case of illness, provided the captain of the opposing side consented. W. A. Larned was accordingly consulted, but the American captain, while expressing sincere sympathy with the English team, decided according to Regulation 8<sup>1</sup> that if Mahony played in the first round of the singles he must also play in the second. He would agree to this substitution, but he would not consent to three men playing in the singles. Accordingly Mr. Collins had to decide whether he should play Mahony in both singles and run the risk of losing them both or whether he should concede America a "walk-over" in the first round and pray that "R. F." might be well enough to contest, and *win*, the second. Then there were the doubles; but here the Americans did not object to the substitution of Mahony for "R. F." as a partner for "H. L." Mr. Collins took the bolder course. He scratched the man with the injured arm and presented America with a match—as it happened the only one<sup>2</sup> they "won." Possibly the English captain remembered Dr. Pim, or possibly he had unqualified confidence in the administrations of Dr. Whipple. Providence evidently heard the prayer of Mr. Collins for on the next two days it rained so hard that no play was possible. On the Friday the patient not only went into court and defeated the Wrenns in partnership with his brother,<sup>3</sup> but experienced no ill effects after the match. England was now one up with two to play. Prospects of victory looked very rosy.

<sup>1</sup> Since amended, see Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> H. L. Doherty beat R. D. Wrenn in three straight sets.

<sup>3</sup> The score was 7-5, 9-7, 2-6, 6-3.

"The chances are against us," said one Boston daily,<sup>1</sup> "and most of the wiseacres say the cup is already lost."

The Davis Cup was lifted on that day but only by an almost superhuman effort on the part of the Englishmen. "The outcome of it all hung balanced," says one eye-witness, "until almost the very end of play. First it wavered one way, then another, and at times was exactly even,<sup>2</sup> until not only the players but the gallery<sup>3</sup> itself was worn to a frayed and jagged edge. It all went to make the severest kind of test and that the British players stood it so well adds no little to their glory. The putting on of two such matches, side by side, at the same time was the refinement of cruelty to tennis lovers and to the players must have been nerve-racking." Mr. Collins also refers to this contiguity: "There was nothing between the two courts but the umpire's ladder, and it was very disconcerting to players in the middle of a rest, when perhaps they were trying to time a well-placed lob, to hear roars of applause fired across their court at the neighbouring match. They had not only the anxiety of their own match on their shoulders, but could not help following the state of affairs in the other."

Of these two historic matches "R. F.'s" engagement with Wren was the most spectacular and exciting, while the meeting of the Anglo-American champions produced the better tennis. "Never," says one intelligent onlooker, "had such enthusiasm and patriotic demonstration been seen in an American

<sup>1</sup> *Boston Daily Advertiser*, August 8, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> At one and the same time, when England wanted but one match to win, Larned and "H. L." were "two sets all, four all," with Larned 40-15; while in the next court "R. F." and Wren were exactly level in the fifth set!

<sup>3</sup> Over 5000 were present.

athletic arena. Strokes were so marvellous that hats were not infrequently tossed in the air and hundreds stood up and wildly cheered." It is greatly to the credit of Americans that they could be so thoroughly impartial. No discordant note or lack of taste marred the occasion, and when Larned was at last beaten and the Davis Cup had been secured by the visitors a most extraordinary ovation was given H. L. Doherty as he slowly walked to the clubhouse. Although the other match was going on, four thousand persons rose as one man and gave this stranger in a strange land a reception such as no foreign athlete has ever received in America. "It was a spontaneous recognition," said one writer,<sup>1</sup> "of the great proficiency, pluck and sportsmanship that has endeared this modest and unassuming British player to all lovers of clean sport."

"H. L.'s" volleying and his accurate placing appear to have been a revelation to all. In covering the court the British champion was stealthy as a cat and seemed to have a wonderful faculty of anticipating Larned's every move. He was seldom taken by surprise and played throughout with machine-like precision. At the end he was in perfect condition, showing no effect of the great strain which he had borne for more than two hours and a half. "R. F." on the other hand, was visibly out of condition at the close; it was only by a supreme effort he managed to gain the necessary points in the last game.

So the symbol of international supremacy came to England, borne on the shoulders of these inimitable brothers.

<sup>1</sup> *Boston Sunday Globe*, August 9, 1903.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE STORY OF THE DAVIS CUP (1904-1907)

Four years' residence of the trophy in England—The coming of the Continental expert—Belgium beaten but not disgraced at Wimbledon—Norman Brookes mentioned as a "dark horse"—America mobilises an invading team—Beals Wright defeats Brookes at Queen's—The Australian uses an abnormally loose racket—America fiercely attacks the holders at Wimbledon but is repulsed by Smith and the Dohertys—American training methods—Holcombe Ward's electrical display against H. L. Doherty—A wholesome dread of S. H. Smith—A fatal blunder at the net—The United States advance again—Grievous accident to Beals Wright—American ladies braced in spirit at Newport—The Wildings are faced with a problem—England again wins the challenge round—Dohertys have a narrow escape in the doubles—A lean year at hand—H. L. Doherty's retirement and its consequences—"Touch-and-go" character of the 1907 matches—Karl Behr's brilliant but erratic attack—Brookes more vulnerable in doubles—The Australian's magnificent record in the singles—The cup goes to the Colonies

**I**N the last chapter I dealt with the British campaign waged on American soil in quest of the Dwight Davis trophy—a campaign that, after two unsuccessful assaults, culminated in the capture of the international championship. In this chapter I propose to review the principal events associated with the four years' residence of the Cup in this country, its prosperous defence for three of these years and its annexation on the fourth and last

occasion by the envoys from the Colonies—its second quadrennial movement.

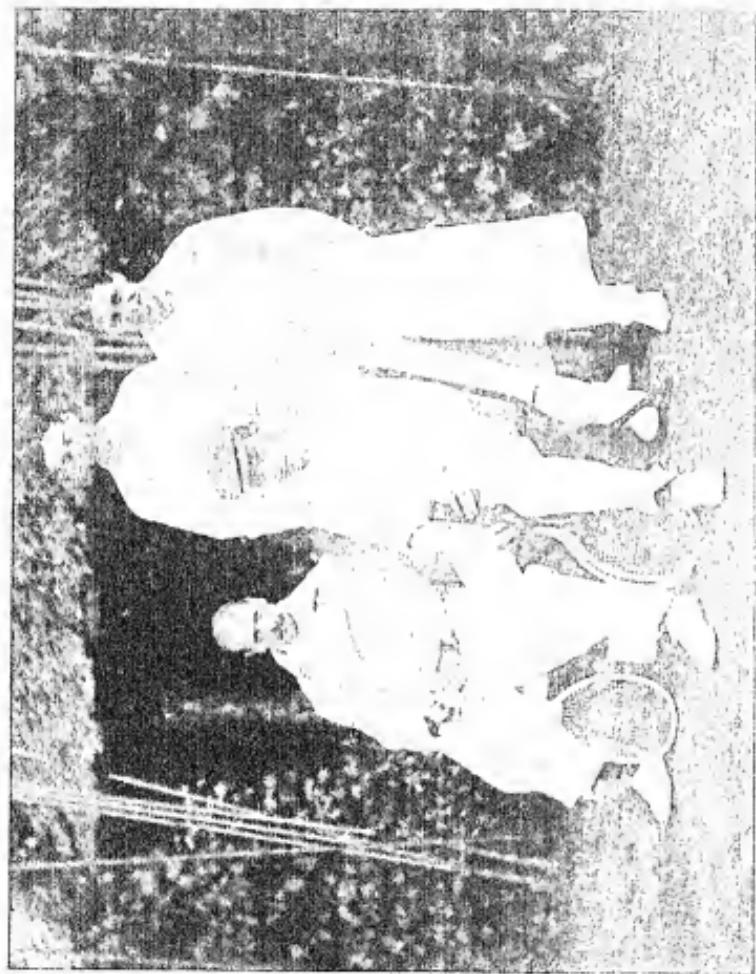
Though the competition lists had been open to all nations from the first, it was not until the theatre of war shifted to England that other countries threw down the gauntlet. But for some years the leading players in France and Belgium had been girding up their loins with this object in view, and the strenuous battles which they fought with representative English exponents in their own arenas, more especially on the hard courts at Brussels and Ostend and on the wood floor at Auteuil, inspired them with increasing confidence. Nevertheless the French and Belgian teams which came to Wimbledon in 1904 to participate in the preliminary ties, though heartily welcomed, were scarcely considered serious rivals to the English holders and in the absence of American challengers,<sup>1</sup> the custody of the Davis Cup at any rate for another year was considered safe. Apart from the fact that the Continental visitors suffered from the initial disadvantage of playing on an unfamiliar grass surface—for there are no grass courts across the Channel—their experience of foreign matches was limited to a rare excursion over their own borders, while their engagements with English players, even on their own courts and amid their own friends, had been confined to occasional tussles with men not always of the first rank. In these matches they had displayed considerable dash and had employed distinctive methods that certainly embarrassed, if they did not outwit, the tourists from the

<sup>1</sup> The U.S.N.L.T.A. decided to wait another year before making an attempt to regain the cup.

game's birthplace. But there was sometimes too plainly visible in these young foreign zealots a temperamental trait that occasioned weakness at critical moments and that provoked vicissitudes of form more potent and less under control than those which affected English competitors. This inability to maintain a high standard over five long sets was likely to become less as time went on—indeed, recent proof of its gradual disappearance has been forthcoming ; and it was a tolerably safe assumption that the Continental experts who came over in 1904 would show a marked improvement subsequently.

Belgium's narrow defeat of France in the preliminary round was a surprise. It is true the Netherlands were represented by two players, Paul de Borman and Willie Lemaire, who had a justly merited reputation on the Continent ; but France had Max Décugis and P. Aymé, the first at least considered capable of winning both his singles ties. Décugis was not then as formidable as he is now ; he had not brought his service and his forehand cross-drive to that state of perfection which brooks little comparison and which won him the London Covered Court Championship in 1907. Nor had he yet schooled his mercurial temperament. But he was then, as now, a great player, free, natural and versatile, and his defeat by Lemaire after a protracted five-set contest came as a surprise and practically decided the issue against France.<sup>1</sup> Lemaire deserves great credit for this victory and for his crushing defeat of Aymé, the more so because

<sup>1</sup> Belgium beat France by 3 matches to 2. France won the doubles, 3 sets to 2, and Décugis beat de Borman 6-4, 5-3, retired.



X. LEKHENG, P. AND BOONSAK, THAILAND; P. S. F. WEST, H. L. DODD, ENGLAND  
TEAMS IN THE DAVIS CUP CHALLENGE ROUNDS, WIMBLEDON, 1960.



he is psychologically a bad match-player and might have been expected to collapse under the strange conditions. Lemaire is the owner of a most prepossessing backhand drive which, keeping the ball at a low trajectory, was not calculated to cheer the heart of the Frenchman, seeking for a high bound to punish. To those who had not seen him previously perform, de Borman's style attracted much interest and his peculiar forehand drive, the ball being taken at the top of the bound with a straight arm and breaking treacherously on the other side of the net, was the subject of general comment. On a hard court this stroke is a veritable terror and I have a vivid recollection of encountering it for the first time at Homburg the year before this international ; of vainly striking at something which I took to be the ball, but which nearly always proved to be the buoyant atmosphere of the Taunus region. On grass the "kick" is less dangerous, for the pace being slower there is more time to gauge its movements ; but that it was a useful weapon at Wimbledon was proved by the fact that de Borman scored the first set against Frank Riseney in the challenge round and made a bold fight for the last two. Parenthetically let me add that this broad-limbed Belgian is one of the cheeriest Davis Cup competitors we have welcomed. I shall always remember the genial and somewhat naïve speech he delivered at a Café Royal banquet. It was the utterance of a large-minded, modest sportsman ; for de Borman is adept at other things besides lawn tennis.

The challenge round in 1904 ended, as it was expected to end, in a conclusive victory for the

holders. Save for the match in which Riseley forfeited a set to de Borman, England won all her ties in three straight sets. "H. L.," then the holder of both the English and American championships, lost but six games in his match with de Borman, demonstrating once more his supreme capacity for adapting his attack to meet new methods and his indifference to the breakaway service. The doubles was practically a farce, the two Dohertys, unruffled, their armour unsoiled, won as they chose.

The first invaders were thus repulsed with heavy casualties. But before the sound of the firing had quite died away, it was unofficially announced, not only that America would "come after her own" next year, but that Australasia would enter the arena. This was good news. Under the regulations governing the competition, Australia and New Zealand were united as one nation. Ready at hand in this country, just finishing an academic course at Cambridge University, was a young player, a native of Christchurch, New Zealand, whose rapidly-maturing skill had already won him fame and whose strenuous personality was soon destined to make itself known at almost every tournament in this country and on the Continent. In 1905 Anthony Wilding had not acquired such an ace-winning backhand as he has to-day, nor was he so good a general; but he owned a forceful top-charged drive executed from a high bound and a variety of twist services which had not then had a chance to become "stale." Clearly he was an asset to Australasia and being on the spot and familiar with English methods of attack was instantly voted a place in

the team. Writing to me about this time Wilding had said: "I hear I have been nominated for Australasia. That ought to mean a go against the Yankees in the final round, and possibly a contest with England. Who my colleagues will be I do not know, but I hear Brookes and Dunlop are coming and that Brookes is a dark horse. The news is rather vague and my instructions also." The great majority of English players had heard nothing of Norman Brookes at that time. To them he was not even a name, so distant was the scene of his Victorian triumphs from the headquarters of the game. A few, taking their cue from Dr. Eaves who had paid several visits to the land of his birth since settling in England, displayed more interest and even some concern; but these were inclined to reserve their opinion until the mysterious left-hander had arrived and had given a proof of his capacity. Of A. W. Dunlop more was known, for he had won the Victorian championship as far back as 1899 and was regarded by the *cognoscenti* as a sound and pertinacious player, just the man in fact for strenuous international work.

Meanwhile America was mobilising her henchmen with due ceremony and no little confidence. Cousin Jonathan had his eyes fixed securely on the cup and he spared neither time nor trouble to pick the best men. There was some inevitable criticism, here and there a little heartburning among those passed over; but when William Larned, Beals C. Wright, Holcombe Ward and William J. Clothier finally set sail under the trustworthy captaincy of Mr. Paul Dashiell, Americans from President Roosevelt

downwards united in voting them a fine fighting team. The first three had played in England fairly recently, Ward in the memorable double mentioned in the preceding chapter, while of Clothier it was said that he had the figure of a guardsman and the strokes of a Larned. Trained and tended like racehorses, these four Americans were certainly a formidable, almost an awe-inspiring, combination. I remember being impressed by such outward symbols of majesty as black shoes, leather racket-cases and a certain dignified aloofness off the courts.

Queen's Club was the venue of the eliminating ties this year, and here in the preceding London championships Beals Wright gave an earnest of the Americans' form by defeating Brookes, whose remarkable service and volleying powers had already created a mild sensation. The States were drawn to play France in the first round, while Australasia were pitted against Austria, making their *début* in the international arena. There was nothing very remarkable about these contests. They ended in hollow victories<sup>1</sup> for the two English-speaking nations. Décugis clearly demonstrated his comparative impotence on grass, while both the Austrians, and especially Von Wesseley, created a most favourable impression. The Americans did not call on "Champion Larned" in this series, but Holcombe Ward, the then title-holder, was in great form, executing his inimitable chop volleys with true artistic delicacy. Brookes and Dunlop, I recall, had

<sup>1</sup> Neither America nor Australasia lost a match. America lost one set (Clothier to Germot) and Australasia two (Wilding one each to Kinzl and Von Wesseley).

some difficulty in beating the Austrians in the doubles without the loss of a set. It was obvious they had not yet got the bit between their teeth in double harness.

To say that America beat Australasia by five matches to love in the final round is to furnish no true conception of what in reality was a stern and strenuous engagement. Wilding was comfortably disposed of by both Wright and Larned—this result was expected. What was not expected and what when it happened, occasioned many lifted eyebrows, was the victory which both these Americans scored over the redoubtable Brookes, by that time thought to be well-nigh invincible, a worthy foe for Doherty's steel. The battle<sup>1</sup> between Wright and Brookes was one of the best exhibitions of spectacular tennis I have ever witnessed. Both men were left-handed, which added a novelty to the conflict, and both had whipping, breakaway services which they followed to the net. The rests therefore were mainly composed of short and sharp volleying often characterised by great brilliancy and audacity and the fact that the match lasted over two hours is an indication of how the issue wavered. In this contest Brookes used an abnormally loose racket, the gut being knotted with the object of invoking more break, and (since repenting of his whim) I believe he attributes his defeat to this cause. For my own part I am inclined to give Wright full credit for this noteworthy victory. On that day he was slightly the better tactician, his "kills" had more finality, his volleying was a shade crisper. And the fact that Larned subsequently

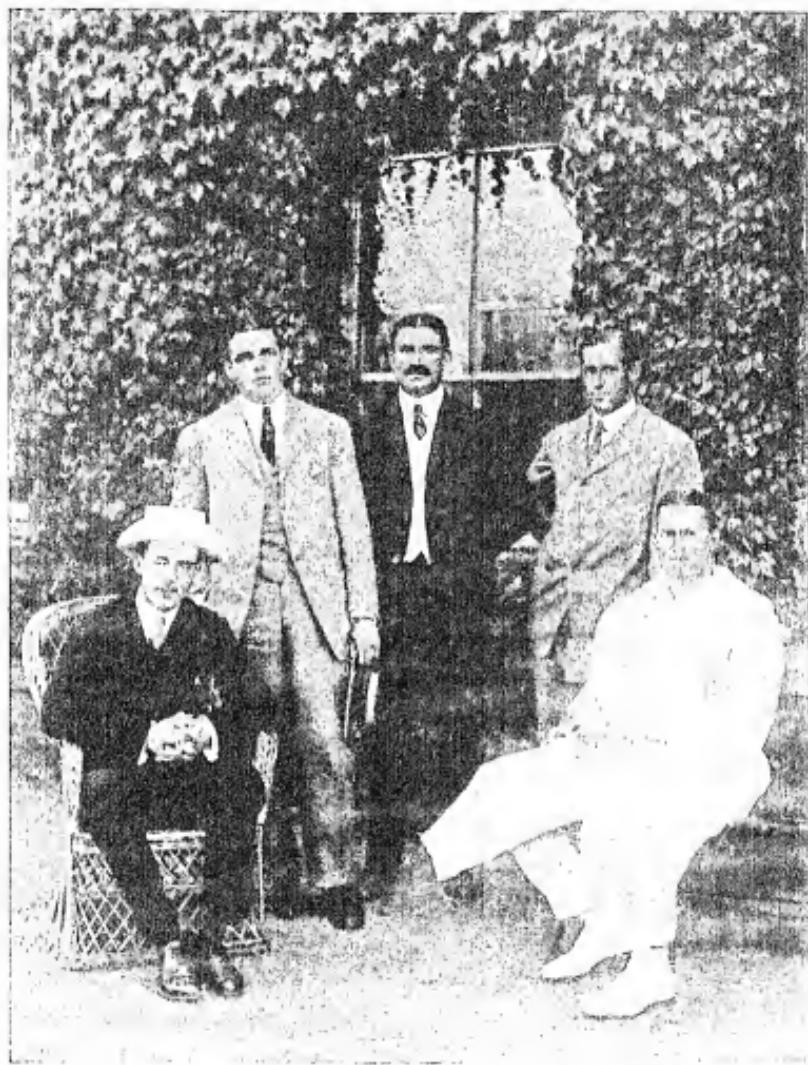
<sup>1</sup> Wright won 12-10, 5-7, 12-10, 6-4.

defeated Brookes without the loss of a set,<sup>1</sup> though the first was mighty close, confirms this impression. I do not think Larned could have beaten Wright as the latter played at Queen's on that occasion. The doubles was a tough and anxious engagement for the American champions, but they survived it creditably, losing but one set.<sup>2</sup> Thus was America once more able to challenge England for supremacy.

Again I would remark that the figures chronicling the triumph of the holders are entirely misleading if taken by themselves. For America to lose two five-set matches in the singles, both against the English champion, and to come within a few aces of vanquishing the Doherty brothers in the doubles, while it testifies to the imperviousness of the home defence, also demonstrates the formidable character of the American attack—an attack that quite conceivably, with a little more luck, might have achieved success. I shall always thank my lucky stars I was a witness of this memorable struggle, to my mind one of the most impressive ever seen at Wimbledon. Both sides—I must not forget to mention that S. H. Smith was wisely selected to assist the Dohertys in the defence—were screwed up to concert pitch. So carefully trained and dieted were the Americans—no University crew ever received so much attention—that I veritably believe that if the combat had been postponed another week Mr. Dashiell would have become positively morbid with over-anxiety. Rumours used to reach me of some of the training “wheezes” employed, and one day, happening to penetrate into

<sup>1</sup> Larned won 14-12, 6-0, 6-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ward and Wright beat Brookes and Dunlop, 6-4, 7-5, 5-7, 6-2.



FRONT: C. W. WARD, BEALS C. WRIGHT, MR. PAUL DALSHIELD (CAPTAIN), W. A. LARNEAU, W. S. CRAFTIER  
THE AMERICAN DAVIS CUP TEAM, 1905



the sanctity of the dressing-room, I discovered Ward busily engaged in applying a solution of alcohol to his body. Another "tip" of the Americans was to drink cold tea between the sets. Even now I can see Mr. Paul Dashiell corkscrewing his way among the spectators armed with a capacious teapot which he impressively deposited on the umpire's chair. Not that the envoys from the States went about boasting of their prime condition. They observed, one and all, a solemn reticence about the Spartan methods adopted to make them perfect athletes—possibly lest the secret should reach their rivals' ears! Instead of housing themselves at a fashionable West End hotel the team made their headquarters at Wimbledon, where none could frustrate their discipline or lure them away from the paths of righteousness.

I think no one could ever desire to witness a more electrical display than Holcombe Ward presented against H. L. Doherty in the first two sets, both of which fell to his racket—I had almost written his magician's wand. It was like nothing ever seen on the centre court before or since. There was the little dark-haired New Yorker, with his immobile, intellectual face, his short pattering stride, literally "downing" the world's champion, or so it seemed, before the eyes of his admirers. Up like a racing dog would come the agile Ward after his service and with a deft turn of his pliable wrist intercept every one of the champion's returns—now a chop that made the ball lie dead, like a mashie shot on the green, next a shot cross volley that found an opening even Doherty could not guard, then a backhand hook which barely

grazed the top of the net. Of course his service broke—what American volleyer's does not? But in this match it gyrated more than ever and it puzzled the champion a good deal. From my place on the line I could perceive Mr. Dashiel vainly attempting to suppress his smiles and in the committee box I could see the high priests of English lawn tennis moving uneasily in their seats. But the salvation of "H. L." was at hand. His own well-stored reservoir of strength permitted him to wait with confidence for the draining of the American's resources; he felt, too, that Ward's exhibition was like a pyrotechnic display that leaves darkness in its train. In fact, the American soon began to hoist signals of distress; his sprints to the net became less frequent, his hand lost much of its cunning, he resorted to lobbing and some of it was short enough for Doherty to smother. The end came painfully with a love set.<sup>1</sup> It was almost a tragedy.

Here I should like to point out that the laws in America permit a player to enjoy seven minutes' respite at the conclusion of the third set during which he may secure a "rub-down" and change his flannels, whereas in England no such recuperative pause is allowed. I do not say Ward would have beaten Doherty if he had obtained this "breather"—for he had practically shot his bolt—but, given some such interval to which he was accustomed, his collapse would probably have been less conspicuous.

The Americans have always had a wholesome dread of S. H. Smith. They worship at the shrine of Doherty, but they would sooner see either of the

<sup>1</sup> H. L. Doherty beat Ward 7-9, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2, 6-0.

brothers on the other side of the net in a single than the great base-line driver. Not only is Smith absolutely unruffled by their screw services, accepting them more readily than the lightning deliveries of F. L. Riseley, but he can pass them with impunity at the net. "We are forced to play Smith from the back of the court," they would say; "to go up is to forfeit an ace or at best to invite disaster." R. D. Little and Ward both tried the close-quarter game in 1906; it failed hopelessly. Larned tried it during part of his match in 1905; he was forced to retreat. The aim was too accurate, the force too severe. Larned managed to win one set from Smith, while taking two from Doherty. In fact, Smith's record against the Americans at Wimbledon is superior to that of any other Englishman,<sup>1</sup> and it will always be a source of keen regret that he was not able to defend the Cup in 1907. Another memorable double was fought out in 1905 between the respective champions of England and America. Ward and Wright proved themselves more consistent, better tacticians than Ward and Davis—Wright, too, is a prince among low volleyers and Ward second to none at the judicious toss—and the Dohertys were only just able to run out in the fifth set.<sup>2</sup> But for the fact that Ward accidentally hit the net after essaying a simple smash—one of those nerve-straining incidents that vitally affect the issue—America would, I fancy, have won this great match.

The failure of the 1905 team to recapture the Cup naturally caused disappointment in the States and

<sup>1</sup> In Davis Cup ties against America at Wimbledon Smith has won 12 sets and lost 1. H. L. Doherty has won 12 and lost 6.

<sup>2</sup> The Dohertys won 8-10, 6-2, 6-2, 4-6, 8-6.

the policy of the American captain in playing Larned in the singles ties of the challenge round in preference to Beals Wright, who had exhibited such fine form against Australasia, was a theme for some adverse comment. As to this, it need only be said that the selection of Larned was put to the vote of the whole team before the meeting with England and that he obtained his place with the full approval of his colleagues. Possibly Wright might have done a little better than the present champion, but I doubt whether he would have beaten Smith, leaving Doherty out of the question.

Far from damping the enthusiasm of the Americans this last reverse only served to kindle fresh ardour, and when next March came round the States not only advanced with another challenge but immediately set about recruiting a representative team. Beals Wright having won the American championship on his return from Ward, was naturally the first choice. The past holder was the second and the company was completed with the inclusion of Ralph D. Little of New York and Kreigh Collins of Chicago, champion of the Western States. The original idea was to play Ward and Wright in all the important matches, reserving Little and Collins in case of mishap; but to universal regret Fate ordained that Beals Wright, the hope of his side and undoubtedly the best singles player in America at that time, should meet with a grievous accident to his hand on the eve of sailing from New York. It seems that the Bostonian, who was in training at the Crescent Athletic Club and was alone at the time, got up early in the morning and in attempting to

force open a soda water bottle broke the glass and gashed the forefinger of his right hand. He was just able to telephone for medical assistance before collapsing. A special steamer was chartered to take him across to New York where the best available treatment was administered. On the next day Wright set sail for England with his arm in a sling and with doubtful prospect of representing his country in the internationals. The disaster was the more unfortunate because just prior to its happening the patient had exhibited form which gave tennis supporters in America every cause for the liveliest confidence and suggested his ability to win both his singles ties. On arriving at Liverpool Wright still had his hand bound up, but he informed me cheerily on the quay that, under favourable circumstances, he might be able to participate in the challenge round if America survived the preliminary tie with Australasia.<sup>1</sup> These circumstances, however, did not occur. On the contrary, when he arrived in London Wright was immediately ordered into a nursing home where it was found that blood-poisoning had supervened in his finger. Days of some anxiety followed that naturally affected adversely both the form and the spirits of the remaining players. But the meeting with Australasia had been arranged to take place at Newport, Monmouthshire, and thither journeyed the respective teams, the Americans being joined by a party of ladies who, I remember, expressed much disappointment at the grim appearance of the Welsh

<sup>1</sup> France and Austria both challenged and the first round was set for decision at Liverpool; but at the last minute through reasons not quite apparent neither team appeared on the scene.

Newport, so different in its social atmosphere from their own. The fair supporters nevertheless zealously explored the neighbourhood in quest of diversion, modern and ancient, and judging by the uproarious gaiety which prevailed at the Westgate Hotel after dusk their excursions in the Wye Valley must have braced their spirits. It was here that I first met the gentle and genial Mr. Frederick Wilding, father of Anthony Wilding, himself a former doubles champion of New Zealand. Mr. Wilding, visiting England after many years absence, came to Newport at an opportune moment, for it was against Holcombe Ward in this workaday city that his son gave of his very best. I recall that the American was leading five-three in the fifth set and apparently sailing serenely towards victory. A terrific fight for the next two games ended in the Colonial drawing level and then, after another sparkling exhibition on both sides, running out at eight-six. Meanwhile the other Australasian, L. O. S. Poidevin, withdrawn from the cricket arena to wield the racket, was showing surprising ability against Little, and when the two Wildings and myself left the ground to catch our train for London, Australasia actually held a lead in the final match of the series.<sup>1</sup> Now a problem presented itself. The Wildings, father and son, had arranged to fly off that night to Prague for the Austrian tournament. If Poidevin took the third set from Little—he had already won one—and then

<sup>1</sup> At the finish America beat Australasia by three matches to two. Wilding won both his singles ties; but Poidevin was narrowly beaten by Little, as well as by Ward, and the doubles went to America 7-5, 6-2, 6-4.

another, Australasia would be in the challenge round and the little excursion to Bohemia would have to give way to a strenuous tussle on the centre court at Wimbledon. Most men would have waited to see the finish out, but Wilding *fil's* was just then in one of his most virulently peripatetic moods, and nothing would persuade him (except Poidevin's unexpected victory, when he would willingly have stayed) to forego or postpone the trip. Accordingly I recollect arranging with some good friend to wire the result of the last match to Swindon, where we stopped *en route* to Paddington. We spent the whole of the journey to Swindon speculating on Poidevin's chances, and when the buff-coloured envelope was put into my hands as I alighted we had all been forced to agree that Austria was "on." It was. Poidevin had struggled bravely and had forced the third set to 'vantage games, but he was not in adequate practice for a first-class bout and Little found all his form in the final set. The Wildings had twenty minutes to get to Cannon Street from Paddington and one porter was knocked down in the rush that ensued to get the baggage on to a hansom. I'm not sure how much was left behind here, but at Cannon Street the Wildings were. Motor-cabs had not then become general and even an irrepressible young Colonial must encounter some rebuffs.

The challenge round at Wimbledon in 1906 was shorn of much of its interest by the enforced idleness of Beals Wright, whom I can see now sitting by the umpire's chair and holding an umbrella aloft with his uninjured hand. Poor Wright! He must have cursed his luck that day. Deprived of meeting

"H. L." and Smith the previous year in singles, he had come over this year acknowledged by all to have a prior right; yet once more he had to play the *rôle* of spectator. His colleagues made a brave fight, but except in the doubles they were outclassed. It is true Little astounded the gallery, as Ward had done the previous summer, by capturing two sets from H. L. Doherty, the American's volleying being as clean as it was audacious. But the English champion had somewhat under-estimated the powers of his opponent and began in his slackest mood; when fully roused to action by the figures on the score-board he quickly turned the tables and finished, as he always does, the fresher of the two. S. H. Smith again showed his appreciation of American methods by winning two matches and six sets off the reel, his lightning passes being most exhilarating to watch; while in the doubles the Dohertys, for the fifth year representing their country in this department, had a much stiffer ordeal to face than they expected and at one period were in real danger of defeat.<sup>1</sup> Six weeks later the brothers lost the championship to Smith and Riseley, and I cannot help thinking their display in the international was a portent of what was to follow. In his overhead strokes "R. F." was palpably less severe than usual. "H. L." was not quite so infallible as he had been. There was no appreciable decline in his play, but "R. F.'s" temporary loss of strength had loosened the strong link which had made them such an invulnerable combination.

England, then, for the third year in succession

<sup>1</sup> The Dohertys beat Ward and Little, 3-6, 11-9, 9-7, 6-1.

had defended the international trophy without the loss of a match, and so long as she could command a team equal in skill and experience to those which gave battle on these occasions, the Cup appeared safe. But the lean year was at hand. Early in 1907, just before the Covered Court Championship began at Queen's in April, it was announced that H. L. Doherty had decided to sheath his racket for a year. He would neither defend his title at Wimbledon nor be available for the international contest. I will not here set out the many reasons reported to have brought about this retirement which, at first discredited, subsequently caused the keenest disappointment. Most of them are probably wide of the mark. There was no apparent decline in form or in physique, but there was an appreciable escape of enthusiasm, and a strong desire to forego for one season at any rate the strain and excitement of strenuous match play. Perhaps Doherty would have been better advised had he announced his intention to resign the championship at the end of the preceding season; but as it was, the question being one for personal consideration, no complaint could legitimately be brought against the holder for relinquishing his title after five years of sovereignty. The internationals stood in a different category. Here a player was not called upon to vindicate his own prowess and keep intact his own reputation. He was required to assist his country in the effort to retain possession of a coveted symbol—that of international supremacy. It was a case of honour not honours, and though there may have been some good and valid reason which kept "H. L."

out of the team in 1907, I think the people who expressed surprise at his absence had some cause for their feeling. "H. L." had borne the heat of the international campaign so long and so triumphantly—he had never once suffered a reverse either in England or America—that I can well believe he considered himself justified in withdrawing on the sixth occasion and leaving the work to other men. The pity was that he should have selected a year when his services were most required and when, so far as one could judge before the competition began, his absence meant the forfeiture of the Cup to foreign or colonial hands.

Neither of the Dohertys being available, the selection committee had to seek other defenders. Needless to say, S. H. Smith was among the first to be asked and though the famous Stroud player had not participated in any tournaments during the summer, he consented to go into training and came to Wimbledon to get his hand and eye into trim. Frank Roseley, still suffering from the effects of a strained shoulder, did not play at all in 1907, and A. W. Gore had been selected to co-operate with Smith in the singles, the ex-champion with H. Roper Barrett being the combination for the doubles. This team, inferior as it was to that of 1905 and 1906, had potential elements of success about it, and the fact that Smith's record in Davis Cup ties eclipsed even that of H. L. Doherty, suggested that two matches at least might be won by the holders, while Gore was thought capable of winning one of his ties. But another withdrawal was to come. After finding in practice matches that his form had suffered by in-

activity and that the damp courts then prevailing militated against a complete recovery, Smith reluctantly retired, and Roper Barrett<sup>1</sup> was deputed to take a double share in the defence. Thus did it come to pass that two of the three men chosen to represent England in the first Davis Cup contest should be solely responsible for the custody of the trophy seven years later. There could be no question as to their claim to this honour in view of the withdrawals that had taken place; but the fact only served to emphasize how dominant the members of the old school still were.

The chief impression left on my mind of the 1907 Davis Cup matches was the "touch-and-go" character of the whole series. Just as America came within a few aces of beating Australasia<sup>2</sup> in the preliminary round—how near the issue was we shall presently see—so did England,<sup>3</sup> despite all anticipations to the contrary, come very near indeed to saving the trophy. Indeed, no series of matches since the international championship was created, except those at Boston in 1903, have hung so long in the balance as these, and it is opportune to reflect that on each occasion the result achieved affected a movement of the Cup. Thus did the defenders in both instances make a desperate effort to stem the invader.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. W. V. Eaves was also nominated for the British Isles.

<sup>2</sup> In aggregate of aces Australia won 703, America 672.

<sup>3</sup> The English team in this and former contests was officially described as "The British Isles"; but ever since the Cup matches were introduced the *personnel* of the English teams actually playing has (with one exception) been confined to Englishmen. Hence the use here and elsewhere of the shorter and more serviceable title.

The next impression recorded from the struggle was that each nation had to depend too much upon the skill and endurance of one man; not one of the three teams, in fact, was well balanced. Beals Wright, as it proved, was as much superior to Karl Behr in generalship on the American side as Brookes was to Wilding on the Australasian side, and the same may be said in lesser degree in regard to the greater capacity of Gore to win singles on the English side. Of course, both England and America were handicapped by the trend of circumstances which necessitated the employment of players not admittedly the best for the work in hand. The holders, as I have said, lacked the services of both Dohertys and of Smith and Rouseley. America would have stood a better chance—in fact, a fairly safe winning chance—if either Larned or Clothier had replaced Behr in the singles and Ward had partnered Wright in the doubles. Not that Karl Behr, entirely new as he was to the international arena, did not give a fine display and justify his inclusion.<sup>1</sup> He possibly did as well against Brookes as any American of that period would have done. But his impulsive temperament and lack of stability at critical moments, his ungovernable desire to finish a rally by a sensational stroke before it had well begun, his inability to "piece himself out" for five protracted sets, were defects which, though they did not detract from the brilliancy of his play, probably lost him the deciding match with Wilding. At one time the simple destruction of a short lob would have made the Yale man "four-two" in the fifth set. It was a stroke the accomplishment

<sup>1</sup> Behr had beaten Larned at Newport, U.S.A., the previous year.

of which might—who shall deny?—have decided the destiny of the Davis Cup and perchance have restored it to its original owners. Behr is by no means singular in missing such chances; the annals of lawn tennis bristle with lost opportunities. I mention the incident to show how the result of great contests may depend upon a slight deflection of the wrist or the smallest miscalculation of the eye.

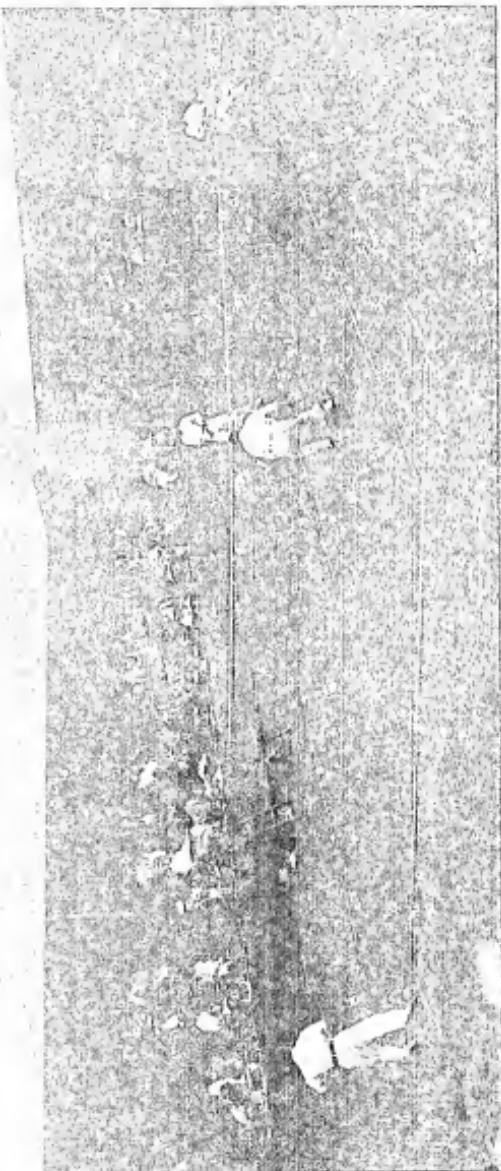
The difference between the two members of each team visible in the singles was even more conspicuous in the doubles when the component parts were joined together. Norman Brookes with his magic service and cunning volleying proved himself well-nigh invincible when engaged in single combat, but allied with Wilding (or for that matter with any player of first-class ability) he became more vulnerable and less irresistible. This fact was demonstrated not only in the two Davis Cup doubles which he lost but in one or two additional reverses. The short cross-volleys and hooked returns, so deadly when only one adversary had to be outmanoeuvred, proved less potent in a wider court where two opposing rackets were concerned. Again, the lack of a back-hand drive comparable in force and direction with his forehand drive and his inability to bury overhead balls were characteristics almost amounting to defects in a double game. To the onlooker most of the game is seen, and though Brookes may honestly believe that Gore and Barrett ought to go down in three sets before himself and Wilding, my own opinion, for what it is worth, is that the Englishmen are a better combination and were fully entitled to

their sensational victory.<sup>1</sup> Neither Brookes nor Wilding has the slaying capacity of Barrett at the net, nor has Wilding the all-round tactical experience and resource of either Barrett or Gore. In service the Colonials are of course superior, but the strange part about both men's deliveries—a temporary aberration incident to many of their engagements—is that they are less irresistible when their ascendancy is most required. This may or may not be a failing common to most champions, but it was certainly not a weakness of the Dohertys, who would, there can be little question, have secured an unembarrassed victory over the present doubles champions. I will go so far as to say in this respect that it was something of an accident that Brookes and Wilding became the joint title-holders in 1907.

But in singles the redoubtable Victorian, in these Davis Cup ties, was indisputably the king of the court. To him and almost to him alone must be given the credit for the capture of the trophy. He lost but one set<sup>2</sup> in four matches; Wilding lost nine in four, both men engaging the same opponents. Brookes beat Wilding's two conquerors in three straight sets. His display, too, in the last match against America was worthy of the occasion. Wright had defeated Wilding and made the issue depend on the battle between Brookes and Behr. With startling nerve the American won the first set, once more giving an electrical exhibition of close-quarter volleying. From

<sup>1</sup> After requiring only a single ace to give them a three-set-to-love victory, Brookes and Wilding were beaten by Gore and Barrett with the following score: 3-6, 4-6, 7-5, 6-2, 13-11. The match lasted over two hours.

<sup>2</sup> To Karl Behr.



A MEMORABLE INTERNATIONAL JOURNEY AT WIMBLEDON, 1907  
By W. GORE AND W. L. LEWIS LAKES OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND, AND A BUILDING CONTRACTOR



the dressing-room window Wright, in a fever of suppressed excitement, was watching the movements of the score-board in the centre court. Before he had dressed the men were *three-all* in the second bout. Was it possible the Cup might—? Wait! There was a set to the Australian. He had got abreast. The Yale boys, crowded together in a corner of one of the stands, had ceased to yell. Old George Wright of Boston had stopped clapping. Now Brookes was gaining rapidly. His jaw was set like a vice. He served and volleyed as he had never served and volleyed before. Behr was passing his hand nervously through his black hair as he walked back "to receive." The ordeal was too great. Hold! His powder was not quite exhausted. He would steady himself to fire his last shots. He would show those Yale fellows, whom he lately captained, that Americans went down with their colours flying. But all the while the grim, iron-nerved Australian, conscious of victory, was advancing to the goal.

That match, in which America's hopes faded and Australasia's triumph was practically sealed, will stand out among the many famous contests that have made the Davis Cup competition both a medium for rivalry and an instrument for goodwill among the nations.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ROUND THE RIVIERA COURTS

Differences in conditions—And in the scale of living expenses—The game *par excellence* on the Continent—The attractions of the Beau Site Courts—Royalty at Cannes—Some social attributes and harmless gaieties—Concerning the Nice Club—Touruament administration at home and abroad—Genial personalities at Nice—Memorable matches in the South of France—The Casino element at Monte Carlo—Playing before celebrities—Tom Burke—Mentone a self-owned club—One effect of railway travelling on the Riviera

**I**SUPPOSE the education of a lawn tennis player or rather of a lawn tennis tourist, cannot be regarded as complete until he has visited the French Riviera during the season and traversed the round of tournaments which constitute one of its features. It is not everybody who can afford the time and the money to patronize these sunny meetings and not everybody who, when he gets to the South of France, can reproduce the form that has brought him fame and prizes on English grass courts. Instances could be mentioned where even champions, attempting to conquer without initial experience the conditions atmospherically, photographically and psychologically novel, have ignominiously failed and returned to a fog-bound London sadder and wiser men. But if a player goes out to the South early enough and surveys the ground

before attempting to erect his structure of tournament successes, disillusionment and dismay may be avoided. He may still find the conditions embarrassing and difficult to master, but he will have made a fool of himself in comparative privacy. Like the cautious householder, about to enjoy the felicities of a hot bath but doubtful as to the temperature of the water, he can go cautiously to work.

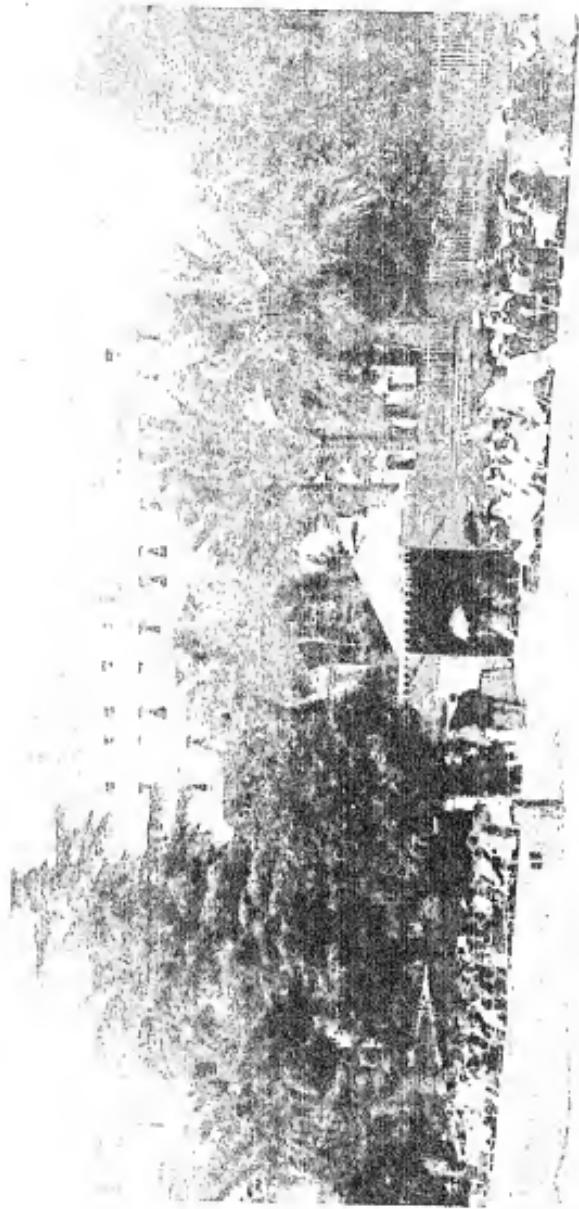
Participation in the Riviera tournaments involves, as I have said, considerable expense, but nothing like the disbursement which is popularly supposed. It is a fallacy, associated with most fashionable resorts abroad, to suppose that the cost of living at Monte Carlo, Nice or Cannes is any more than the cost of living at English coast resorts like Eastbourne or Felixstowe, to name two tennis centres. Of course every facility is offered to the sybaritic visitor to rid himself of superfluous wealth. I have myself—by invitation, let me add—dined at Monte Carlo hotels where a sovereign a day is a normal charge for a bedroom alone and where, if the “guest” prescribes himself a whisky-and-soda and suggests that it might be conveyed to his room, he is mulcted to the extent of five francs on his bill. Nor are some of the less pretentious hotels guileless in respect to flagrant overcharging. I recall one hotel in this district I once had the bad fortune to patronize—or rather which patronized me—where the concierge must have reaped during the season quite a nice little harvest by practising an audacious trick on visitors not smart or bold enough to expose it. It was customary here as elsewhere for the hall-porter to order carriages and to charge for them on a

separate bill exempt from managerial inspection. The porter made it a rule to present this bill for payment on the very eve of the guest's departure, producing it in fact as an after-thought when the traveller was in no mood to discuss details. On subsequently examining this almost illegible document the payer would discover that he had been displaying an abnormal passion for vehicular traffic. At least thrice as many vehicles as he had actually used would be down on the bill. If he was not a man habitually imposed upon, philosophically accepting such taxes as "part of his holiday," he would doubtless smother that concierge, now securely fleecing his next victim, in curses. If detection came on the spot, the wily fellow had a very artful excuse ready at hand. "But *surely*, Mr. So-and-So, you ordered six carriages during your stay?" he would say in his blandest manner. "Why, I telephoned for them *myself*!" Upon your gently pointing out that you were not Mr. So-and-So, but Mr. —, and that you had had but one carriage to take you to the Casino on a rainy night, he would instantly assume a most apologetic air. "A thousand pardons, M'sieur! I have stupidly mistaken you for the gentleman on the first floor. Really, you are dressed almost identically alike. *Voila!* I will correct the mistake instantly." One would have been open to bet that if the "gentleman on the first floor" had taken his departure a few minutes earlier, he would not have been debited with *only one* carriage!

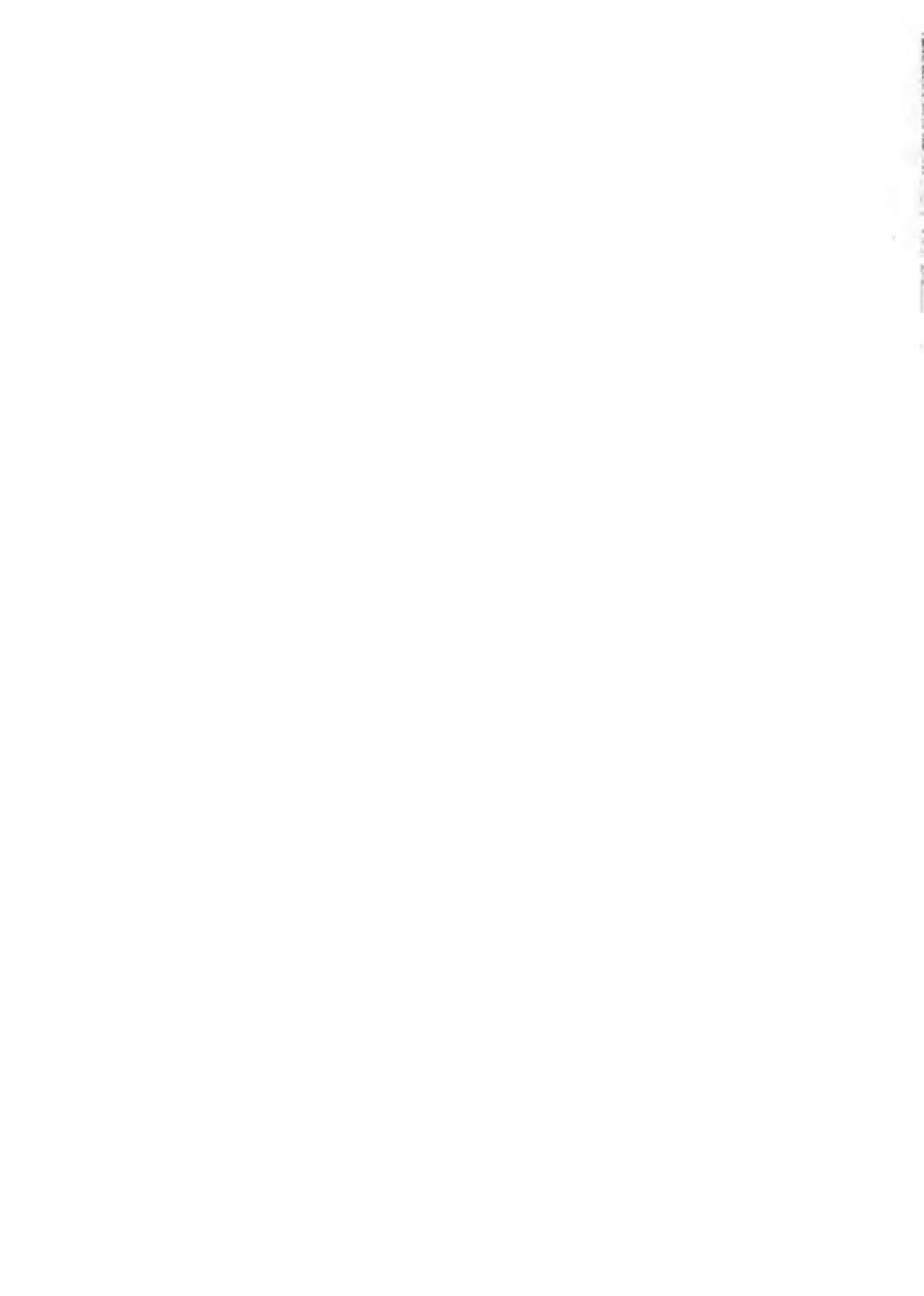
In point of fact, there are to be found on the Riviera hotels suited to every pocket except that of the veritable tripper and him the caterers of sun-

seeking mankind have no desire to lure to the Littoral. Nice, the southern home of winter lawn tennis, has many excellent private hotels where, by arrangement with the proprietors, *pension* can be obtained for ten francs a day—I know of some where the charge is even less. At Mentone the same board-and-residence facilities are obtainable, and though Monte Carlo and Cannes are less inclined to consider the smaller economies of living, the judicious inquirer can always find accommodation at moderate prices at these resorts. Lawn tennis players have a habit here, as elsewhere, of flying in a flock, a habit that ensures a community of social interests as well as tending to reduce the ordinary tariff to a special level. The proprietor of a foreign hotel generally has a keen eye to business, and the prospect of renewing your acquaintance next year and possibly securing new clients through your influence is one which he never neglects. Nor does he fail to regard the tournament competitor as something of an appendage to his establishment, as a guest may be whose name and fame will figure prominently in the papers. For on the Continent lawn tennis is the game *par excellence*. Practised and patronised by royalty and by many a nobleman whose lineage is proclaimed in the *Almanac de Gotha*, it yields to no pastime in focusing attention and forming a topic of social conversation. Indeed, in some of the most fashionable resorts it has no serious rival as an athletic diversion, combining the medium for physical exercise with the theatre for spectacular effect. Municipal authorities have not been slow to recognize its magnetic properties and to develop its popularity.

If I were asked which set of courts on the Riviera offers the most enjoyment and combine with the natural beauty of their surroundings a surface second to none in France, I think there could be only one answer—the Beau Site sand courts at Cannes. "People say," Mr. H. W. Wilberforce once wrote, "that Americans when they die go to Paris; of a verity the Paradise of lawn tennis players is Cannes." That is just praise. It is possible the new-comer may experience greater initial dismay on the Beau Site courts than on some of the other courts in the South. For they may be a trifle slower and more exposed to the torrid glare of an afternoon sun. But once the visitor has shaken off the effects of the cross-country journey and has learnt to treat the new conditions with the respect they deserve he will be charged with admiration for this arena. Situated on an elevation some considerable distance from the centre of the town, in the grounds of a hotel famous for the delectable views of sea and land it commands, the courts are entirely independent of extraneous buildings. Powerful as the sun's rays may be they are not reflected by white-faced villas such as surround the courts at Nice and Monte Carlo. The background is a high green latticed fence on one side and a grove of orange and eucalyptus trees on the other, while the spectators, given no cause to intrude on the playing surface, are catered for on a terrace to the left. The courts themselves are made of a particularly fine and adiactinic sand, indigenous to the district, which rolls out to perfection, especially after a light shower. They receive, as all good courts should, careful and minute attention at the hands of



THE BEAU SITE COURTS, CANNES



experienced gardeners who, with their brooms, hose and rollers, are always to be found in early attendance.

Whether it is the consistency of the climate, the boon and volatile companionship that one meets with at Cannes, the uniformity of the courts or the social gaieties that supplement but do not necessarily interfere with the game, I do not know, but certain it is that here, within a mile of the Esterelles and a stone's throw of the blue Mediterranean, 'mid the blossoms of mimosa trees and the intoxicating perfumes of carnations and other exotics, is an incomparable arena for lawn tennis. The Beau Site has been the Mecca for the racket-laden tourist these thirty years. In its most primitive stage, when the halls were made of worsted and the net as high as a Badminton net, the game was introduced there, while early in the eighties the two Renshaws and H. F. Lawford descended on Cannes with rules and strokes bearing the hall-mark of the All England Club and for years the twins made it the winter headquarters of their exploits. Since then almost every champion from every country has revelled in the sunshine of the Beau Site, displaying his prowess before a company frequently augmented by a royal visitor. It was at Cannes, that King Edward, as Prince of Wales, was first initiated into the scientific principles of first-class lawn tennis and in watching the Dohertys perform observed that the pastime was something more than a gentle exercise for the diversion of garden-party guests. The Grand Duke Michael of Russia was another ardent patron of the tournaments here; so, too, was the late Duke of Cambridge who, on one occasion when distributing the prizes, expressed regret

that army officers fifty years ago had not enjoyed the physical benefits of lawn tennis. The Grand Duchess Anastasie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, mother of the German Crown Princess, has for many years taken an active interest in prize meetings held on these courts, in some of which she has herself competed and to all of which she has brought a keen personal enthusiasm. The great charm about the Beau Site tournament, held usually about the third week in March, is its self-contained character. A few competitors may come over daily from Nice or may walk in from a neighbouring hotel or villa, but the majority are staying in the Beau Site hotel which at this time also shelters a goodly company of genial golfers. Hence there is much innocent fun—bridge parties, flying motor excursions to Monte Carlo, fancy dress balls at which it is a point of honour for every player to appear in some eccentric guise, concerts, dances and I know not what. There is always a bevy of nice girls to keep the men civilized and the merriment is sometimes tremendous. Flirtations are not unknown and more than one player has lost his heart, if only temporarily, in this merry mansion. I recall one occasion, when a popular cup-holder, setting out for a Spanish seaport, there to initiate the Spaniards into the mysteries of the screw service, was literally held up by a party of fair admirers, the ladies virtually using main force to detain the peripatetic champion within their domain. At length when by some physical subterfuge he had eluded their clutches and gained the shelter of the waiting cab, the maidens, not to be out-maneuvred, found a short cut to the road and there so delayed

the progress of the travellers that one of them in his subsequent hurry to catch the train left his overcoat behind on the arm of a porter and forgot to extract his ticket from his registered baggage! Such is the riotous fun at the Beau Site. And when the serious work of the tournament is over there is generally a cry for some freak match in which, possibly as the outcome of a wager, a player attempts to give absurd odds under conditions equally whimsical. If I mistake not, it was at the Beau Site that Ernest Renshaw, garbed in a skirt, handsomely defeated two ladies using a double court, while here it was that H. L. Doherty, conceding what proved to be an impossible handicap to quite a respectable opponent, very nearly, but not quite, placed £100 in the pocket of a sporting admirer.

Close at hand, at La Napoule, easily reached by brake or train or motor, are the Cannes golf links, memorable if only as the scene of Arnaud Massy's first international triumph when, at the great professional tournament organized by the Grand Duke Michael, he secured two first prizes and heralded his apotheosis at Hoylake. On that occasion, I recall, H. L. Doherty did duty as a marker, and as the little champion, cleek in hand and pencil in pocket, strode from hole to hole in the wake of the massively built, iron-nerved Frenchman, who was soon to become the champion of the sister game, I could not help contrasting their respective physiques, yet noting that both had the ideal temperament for spectacular sport. After all, it is the control of the mind, just as much as the control of muscles, that conduces to mastership in games.

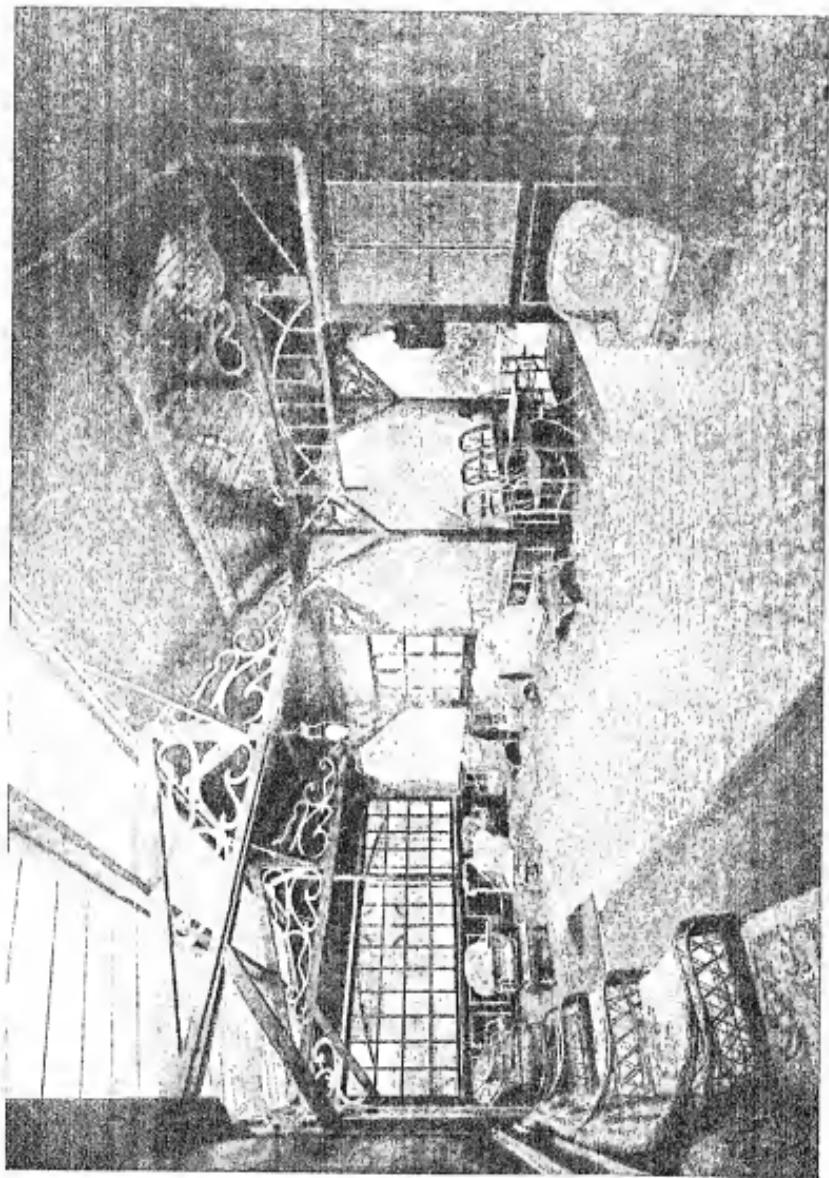
I have written of the Cannes courts<sup>1</sup> first because they are in my humble opinion the best and most engaging arena for the Riviera visitor, hallowed by tradition, still retaining their pristine glory. But they are by no means the only inviting centre for lawn tennis in these radiant parts. As one of the best managed clubs in Europe, the venue of the South of France Championships, and the winter *rendezvous* of many keen Continental votaries, the Nice Club has justly earned wide fame. The tourist has merely to sample its attractive fare to add his meed of praise to the general chorus. With many a stern international match contested in this enclosure, the tennis here is naturally of a more serious character than it is at Cannes or Mentone. Competitors feel, as it were, that they have the eyes of the outside world upon them, whereas at the Beau Site the warriors are occasionally crying a halt to tension. As soon as November turns, the club's wheels, carefully oiled during the summer, begin to revolve, the old *habitués* turn up again, resuming their quarters at the neighbouring Continental or at some villa or hotel close by; notes of a summer's travel and tournaments are compared, the fixture card completed and many a tough private battle waged. Soon after Christmas there is the annual club tournament. Then in the second week of March, with the Nice season at its height and signs of King Carnival's riotings still visible, comes the open tournament, so long dominated by the

<sup>1</sup> A new club, known as The Cannes Lawn Tennis Club, was opened in February 1908.

Dohertys. Thanks mainly to the enterprising and tactful rule of Mr. A. G. Morganstern who, on returning to America a couple of years ago, was compelled to resign the honorary secretaryship, the financial side of the Nice Club has always been flourishing. Having no rent to pay (the ground was the spontaneous gift of a games-loving resident) the committee spend every penny of their surplus funds in improving the ground and its appointments. Thus only last year a complete system of new drainage was installed, each of the four courts being served separately and independently; the handsome pavilion was so improved that the sun gains admission to every room; while the courts themselves were top-dressed anew and made to assume their original colour—the dark red tinge of the Esterel earth. About eighty permanent members, fifty monthly members and some hundred and eighty non-playing members now enjoy the privileges of this luxurious club. The subscription is not high considering the manifold advantages—new balls practically every day, ball-boys, hot shower-baths, all the latest papers are some. I think it is £4 for the year or season, £2 for a month and sixteen shillings for non-playing permanent members. The prizes and cups presented during the season are always handsome, their total value amounting to something like £450. Indeed, the club is almost too generous in this respect. They could not of course award what they do unless their own efforts were supplemented by the town of Nice, the Casinos and many private donors.

As for the open tournament, I know of few

on the Continent so efficiently and expeditiously managed. Organized on imperial lines, every department has its official in charge. There is a reception committee, a squad of gentlemen whose special duty it is to find umpires, and members delegated to superintend the distribution of balls, admissions to the stand, the proper working of the scoring-board, the programmes, the press, and the ball-boys. I am not sure there is not a committee-man in the dressing-room to put your damp clothes into the hot-air cupboard, another to hand you a towel after you have enjoyed the luxury of a warm shower, and a third to operate the giant racket-press that stands waiting to sheathe your sword! Do you seek seclusion and shelter from the sun's glare pending an important match, there is the club-room at hand, containing the very best library of lawn tennis literature I have ever set eyes on, signed portraits of famous players and a generous supply of daily and weekly newspapers. Ample, too, are the facilities for comfortable letter-writing. Lately some of the larger clubs in England have afforded their members the convenience of a writing-room and in other ways studied their interests, but most of them have yet something to learn from the Nice Club. Of course there is an "Order of play" arranged overnight—that boon is now a recognized feature of practically every Continental tournament. The competitor who is staying, let us say, at the Regina Hotel, Cimiez, can telephone down about five o'clock in the afternoon and learn precisely at what hour he will be required to be in attendance in the morning, or whether he will be wanted at all.



LOUNGE AT THE NICE CLUBHOUSE



Similarly, players coming from Mentone or Cannes can fit their movements in with the tabulated schedule; there is no irritating delay, no necessity to mob the referee in order to make him speculate on the probabilities of your playing before lunch or before dusk and certainly none of the elements of chaos and uncertainty that mar the pleasure of a few big tournaments in England. I have dealt with this question of efficient tournament management elsewhere and have no desire in this discursive chapter to emphasize comparisons between the conduct of home and foreign meetings, especially as the latter have initial advantages over English tournaments that conduce to smoother working. But, making full allowance for such facilitating factors as more settled weather, a smaller entry and the absence of competitors with business claims whose leisure is limited and who may arrive late on the ground with a very sound excuse, I am bound to say that the general administration of foreign meetings from the player's point of view is superior. And a close study of the Nice tournament and of others I could name—some of them controlled by Englishmen, let me add—is calculated to remove all doubts.

The Nice Club abounds with genial personalities. I have already mentioned Mr. Morganstern, to whom the club owes a debt which it can never repay. Full of the humour which compels affection, a splendid organizer, always enterprising yet never rash, keen to play but keener to facilitate the play of others, he was a very lovable and able fellow. The present secretary, M. Alvarado Rice, is a worthy successor, who has the best interests of the club at heart. His

zeal during the tournament is proverbial. I shall always remember a few years back, watching his arm descending automatically into the ball-box near the close of every set in which a crack was concerned, drawing out six new balls, dexterously holding them, three in each hand, until the last rally had been played, and then as dexterously shooting them out to the ball-boys standing on either side of the court. The whole process was an exhibition of human mechanism of which M. Alvarado, solemn as a shunter on point duty, was an unconscious master. I once asked M. Alvarado how many new balls he used during the tournament. "From sixty to sixty-five dozen," was his reply. Verily, I think a wink would produce a boxful!

Sound judge of the game, one of its shrewdest chroniclers in the press, and a player of no mean distinction a few years back is Mr. F. L. Fassitt, now a vice-president of the club and for long its bulwark. As I write I can see his round, cheery countenance peering through the stop-netting above the overlapping hands supported on a stick and beneath a Homburg hat cocked slightly on one side. Only once did I see a shadow of genuine annoyance sweep over its plane and that was when the recent champion of a great Republic went into court against an opponent whom Fassitt fancied he could "hold" if not demolish, and yet, to almost everybody's surprise, failed to score a single game in two sets. And the painful part of it was, from the vice-president's point of view, the routed champion did not seem to mind his subjugation in the slightest; he did not even make the customary excuses in the dressing-room. I

rather suspect Fassitt wrote some caustic sentences in his despatch to Paris that night about the South of France championship being treated in such cavalier fashion, and I should not wonder if he is still smarting silently over this whimsical upheaval of form. In truth, you cannot display your best form on Perrier Jouet, followed by *crème de menthe*!

Indefatigable though unobtrusive worker on the club's behalf is Mr. H. W. Stonehewer Bird who, during the tournament, generally has charge of the games-indicator, and is so familiar by years of practice with its somewhat laboured mechanism that the executive, it is said, view his promotion with apprehension. Among regular winter denizens are the twin Allens, almost a landmark in the Avenue de la Gare during February and March. It was here, if I remember aright, that I first had the pleasure of meeting the Countess Schulenburg, best and most graceful of all German lady players and for years an invincible mixed partner to R. F. Doherty. The Countess won the South of France ladies' championship in 1900, 1902 and 1904. S. H. Smith and F. L. Riseley, who in double harness had gone through the previous summer season in England without losing a single match (not even at Wimbledon, where they defeated the Dohertys and gained championship honours) made a very welcome first appearance on the Riviera in 1903—a winter season which probably witnessed the highest-class tennis ever seen in these parts. There were some great matches at Monte Carlo before Smith came on to Nice. In the Monte Carlo Cup "H. L." playing Smith at his own back-court game and beating him 6-2, 6-2, retired to his

brother, the holder, in the semi-final. Meanwhile Riseley had become thoroughly acclimatized and was well-nigh irresistible. He put out Ritchie in the semi-final with the loss of one set in four and then faced "R. F." in what proved to be an ever-memorable encounter. In the third game of the first set Riseley had the bad fortune to slip and fall; he was slightly stunned and he cut his knee severely. Nevertheless, though this mishap naturally affected his game and assisted Doherty to take the first set comfortably at 6-1 (31 aces to 18), it could not damp the fire of the Cliftonian's brilliancy. In the second bout, after the holder led 5-3, Riseley made a magnificent recovery and "fourteen-all" was called before "R. F." forfeited his service and finally the set at 14-16. At this juncture Riseley retired, and though he might not have won the match had he gone on—"R. F." was holding him fairly confidently—the performance was worthy of all credit. It was at the same meeting that the new doubles champions, playing the Dohertys level in the second round of the handicap doubles, repeated their triumph at Wimbledon, Riseley being the hero of a strenuous fight. Both pairs, it may be noted, won five games off the reel in the first set, the final score in the Gloucestershire men's favour being 11-9, 6-3, 6-4. As Smith and Riseley also won the open doubles, defeating R. F. Doherty and G. W. Hillyard in the final, and Smith won the mixed with Mrs. Winch, Monte Carlo has, I doubt not, very pleasant memories for the West of England "firm." A few days later H. L. Doherty and Smith met in the final of the South of France Championship at Nice. Five

terrific sets were contested, Smith winning the first two and the holder the next three. The result demonstrated the truth of Doherty's contention that the only way to beat Smith was to play him at his own game and be prepared to "run a hundred miles"—a plan of campaign which the American internationals never could adopt.

One story may be told relating to the great driver's first and only appearance in the Riviera arena—I believe it to have the additional merit of being true. In one of his early rounds Smith had disposed of a foreign competitor with such ease that the umpire's work was reduced to a minimum. The overwhelming measure of his defeat must have rankled in the latter's mind, for a day or two later seeing the famous Stroud exponent gazing admiringly at a passing Carnival procession, the victim approached him cautiously from the rear and with all his strength flung a handful of confetti in the giant's face, accompanying the discharge with the triumphant yell—"Take dat Smit of Stroud!"

When I first went to Monte Carlo, the tournament was held on a couple of sand courts somewhat cramped for room and encroached upon by the spectators, but admirably situated within a pebble's throw of the Casino doors. Indeed, so conveniently placed was the arena that gamblers on their way to and from the rooms would drop in at the tennis to enjoy an hour of sunshine and meditation; and if their call was made on the return journey and Fate, as was so often the case, had dealt unkindly with them in the Temple of Chance, it did not require a divining-rod to discover the absence of precious metal on their persons.

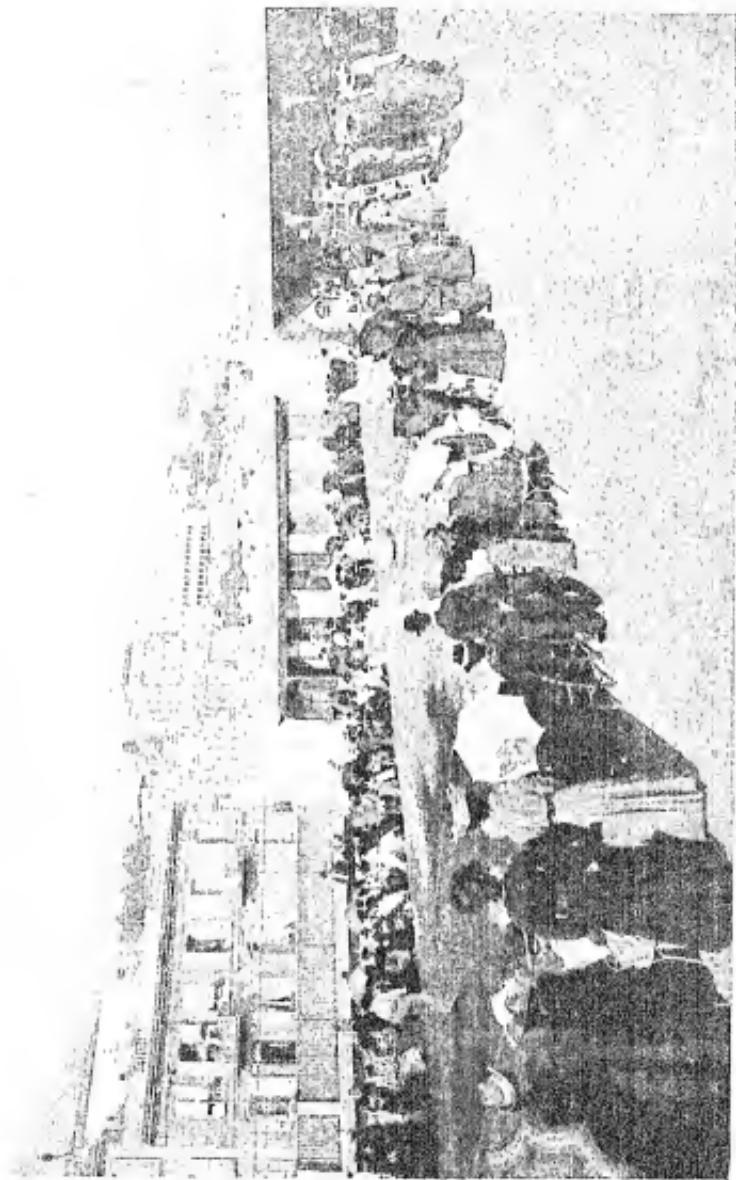
Similarly, if a punter had been lucky enough to bring off a *coup* of any dimensions he rarely succeeded in checking his chuckles; more or less accurate reports of his triumph would rapidly spread over the ground, sometimes to the detriment of efficient unpiping. So contiguous were the tables to the courts in those days that it was no uncommon event for a competitor to stroll into the spider's web between his matches, though the excursion might necessitate a rapid change of garments. I need hardly add that the success or failure attending this mild flutter was calculated to exercise more than a casual influence over his subsequent play. On one occasion a certain player, notoriously unlucky at both ball games (he was about as wild on court as he was in the Casino), turned up after lunch to play a tie in a condition of mind that evidently indicated the loss of his last louis. But the full extent of his impoverishment was never realized until he went into court and hit every ball in the first four games clean out of the ground, finally retiring in a fit of abject misery when he had projected a short lob into the *tir de pigeon* lying below the terrace. Mention of the shooting-gallery reminds me that a special event was reserved for those expert marksmen who forgather at Monte Carlo at this season for the Grand Prix and other prizes. These gentlemen—all well known sportsmen and some of them the finest shots in the world—rather fancied themselves in the handling of the inoffensive racket. The keenest rivalry prevailed, and I am not sure that a few rather bulky books were not incidentally compiled. The main feature of the tournament, however, was the cosmopolitan character of both the gallery and the

competitive lists, the courts serving as a kind of chapel of ease for the Casino, where ladies of hereditary and commercial wealth would come to exhibit their jewels and their dresses, often bringing with them a gold-netted *bourse* and hanging it carelessly on the arm of a chair, and where male denizens of all nationalities would come to be temporarily diverted. I remember once playing a single before the rather perfunctory gaze of such celebrities as Pierpont Morgan, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Kubelik, Santos Dumont, Chevalier, and at least half a dozen star actresses, and of thinking at the time what fun it would be to disturb an American millionaire's hat with a wayward service. On the same night I think I saw Mr. Vanderbilt toying at roulette with five-franc pieces!

Now that the courts at Monte Carlo have been transferred down to the Condamine, a sumptuous hotel having been erected on the old site, there may not be quite the same *éclat* about the proceedings; but the surface is excellent and the space available for play, though yielding a somewhat treacherous background, nearly three times as large. Certainly the Casino authorities have not been slow to recognize that lawn tennis is an indispensable side-show for their society patrons, besides being in ever-increasing demand as a medium for physical exercise. The value of the prizes awarded at the annual tournament is probably as high as at any other meeting in the world, ranging from £12 for the first prize in the open singles (in addition to the chance of winning a £120 challenge cup outright) to £2 for third prizes in second-class handicap events. In all something like £200 is expended in prizes. Though the new courts

are a measurable distance from the fashionable hotels, they are well served by trams, and if the "gallery" is not quite so cosmopolitan as it was of yore, it is certainly quite as large and perhaps more inclined to appreciate the subtleties of first-class lawn tennis. I must not forget to mention that Tom Burke is installed here as professional, and spends most of his time and gathers in a little of the money not deposited on the green cloth by instructing pupils of all ages. Burke has had an experience in the art of coaching second to none, and though by reason of this very fact his own first-class standard may have slightly deteriorated—youth must be served—I warrant there are not many tennis wrinkles that this genial master has not picked up. It was usual every season for Burke to play Tom Fleming, a son of "old Tom," a home-and-home match at Monte Carlo and Cannes, where the latter is stationed. Many a strenuous tussle, generally running into five sets, have these professionals waged. But I must confess that the mechanical consistency of their ground strokes and their lack of *finesse* at short range would never impel me to undertake a long journey to see them battle.

And now a final word about one or two remaining Riviera courts. It was never my good fortune to play at San Remo, though I have visited this beautiful Italian resort and can well believe that the open tournament which is held there about the middle of February—a prelude to the more important meetings that are to follow—combines a delightful environment with a not too exacting programme. Of Mentone and its tournament I have very pleasant recollections, tempered only by memories of the



FINAL OF THE MIXED DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP AT MONTE CARLO, 1907



rather tedious journey involved if one is staying at Nice. I shall never forget once boarding a Paris *rapide* at Nice on a terribly hot morning and finding myself more dead than alive at Mentone. I had been forced to spend more than an hour packed standing in a corridor into which no breath of fresh air could have penetrated since the train left the Gare de Lyon fifteen hours ago. We were detained at Monte Carlo for an abnormally long time—I remember vainly trying to break a window—and the referee's face had deep furrows in it as he resented my tardiness and hustled me into court. I scarcely knew whether I stood on my head or my feet when I began to serve, but I do know I was badly beaten by a man against whom I thought I had a fair chance.

The Mentone Club, no views so grand as those seen from its courts, has been in existence now some seven or eight years and owed its inception and rise primarily to Mr. R. de Bourbel, who is still its president, to Dr. D. W. Samways, Mr. Stewart B. Binny, honorary secretary, and Mr. A. E. Madge, who has managed every open tournament. There are now three excellent sand courts and four croquet lawns, and a membership which beginning with 92 has now risen to over 400. The club stands in a different category to any other on the Riviera in that it is now the owner of its own grounds. These extend to nearly 11,000 square metres and embrace a fully-equipped and most comfortable pavilion at which, let me add, they have learnt the rare art in these parts of brewing good tea. As a spacious boulevard now passes

within a hundred yards of the club down to the sea and villas—hotels and blocks of flats are erected in the immediate vicinity, though not near enough to obscure the Alpes-Maritimes—the committee did a good stroke of business when after some trouble they secured the freehold for a moderate sum.

But then they are keen and enterprising lovers of the racket on the Riviera!

## APPENDIX

### LAWS OF THE GAME

#### THE SINGLE-HANDED GAME

1. FOR the single-handed game, the Court is 27 feet in width and 78 feet in length. It is divided across the middle by a net, the ends of which are attached to the tops of two posts, which stand 3 feet outside the Court on each side. The height of the net is 3 feet 6 inches at the posts, and 3 feet at the centre. At each end of the Court, parallel with the net, and at a distance of 39 feet from it, are drawn the *Base-lines*, the extremities of which are connected by the *Side-lines*. Half-way between the side-lines, and parallel with them, is drawn the *Half-court-line*, dividing the space on each side of the net into two equal parts, called the *Right* and *Left Courts*. On each side of the net, at a distance of 21 feet from it, and parallel with it, are drawn the *Service-lines*. The marking of the part of the *Half-court-line* between the *Service-lines* and the *Base-lines* may be omitted, with the exception of a small portion at the centre of each *Base-line*, as indicated in the plans appended to these Laws.

2. The balls shall not be less than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, nor more than  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter; and not less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz., nor more than 2 oz., in weight.

3. In matches where Umpires are appointed, their decision shall be final; but where a Referee is appointed, an appeal shall lie to him from the decision of an Umpire on a question of law, and in all such cases the decision of the Referee shall be final.

4. The choice of sides and the right to be Server or Striker-out during the first games shall be decided by toss; provided that, if the winner of the toss choose the right to be Server or Striker-out, the other player shall have the choice of sides, and *vice versa*; and provided that the winner of the toss may, if he prefer it, require the other player to make the first choice.

5. The players shall stand on opposite sides of the net; the player who first delivers the ball shall be called the *Server*, the other the *Striker-out*.

6. At the end of the first game the Striker-out shall become Server, and the Server shall become Striker-out ; and so on alternately in the subsequent games of the set.

7. The Server shall serve with both feet behind (*i.e.*, farther from the net than) the base-line, and within the limits of the imaginary continuation of the centre-service and the side-lines. It is not a fault if one only of the Server's feet do not touch the ground at the moment at which the service is delivered. He shall place both feet on the ground immediately before serving, and shall not take a running nor a walking start. He shall deliver the service from the right and left Courts alternately, beginning from the right in each of his service games, even though odds be given or owed.

8. The ball served must drop within the service-line, half-court-line, and side-line of the Court which is diagonally opposite to that from which it was served, or upon any such line.

9. It is a *fault* if the service be delivered from the wrong Court, or if the Server do not stand as directed in Law 7, or if the ball served drop in the net or beyond the service-line, or if it drop out of Court or in the wrong Court. If the Server, in attempting to serve, miss the ball altogether, it does not count a fault ; but if the ball be touched, no matter how slightly, by the racket, a service is thereby delivered, and the laws governing the service at once apply.

10. A fault may not be taken.

11. After a fault, the Server shall serve again from the same Court from which he served that fault, unless it was a fault because served from the wrong Court.

12. A fault may not be claimed after the next service has been delivered.

13. The service may not be *volleyed*, *i.e.*, taken before it touches the ground, even though the ball be clearly outside the Service Court.

14. The Server shall not serve until the Striker-out is ready. If the latter attempt to return the service, but fail, he loses the stroke. If, however, the Striker-out signify that he is not ready after the service has been delivered, but before the ball touch the ground, he may not claim a fault because the ball ultimately drops outside the Service Court.

15. A ball is *in-play* from the moment at which it is delivered in service (unless a fault) until it has been volleyed by the Striker-out in his first stroke, or has dropped in the net or out of Court, or has touched either of the players or anything that he wears or carries, except his racket in the act of striking, or has been struck by either of the players with his racket more than once consecutively, or has been volleyed before it has passed over the net, or has failed to pass over the net before its first bound (except as provided in Law 17), or has touched the ground twice consecutively on either side of the net, though the second time may be out of Court.

16. It is a *let* if the ball served touch the net, provided the service be otherwise good; or if a service or fault be delivered when the Striker-out is not ready. In case a player is obstructed by any accident not within his control, the ball shall be considered a let, but where a permanent fixture of the Court is the cause of the accident, the point shall be counted. The benches and chairs placed around the Court and their occupants, and the Umpire and Linesmen shall be considered permanent fixtures. If, however, a ball in play strike a permanent fixture of the Court (other than the net or posts) before it touches the ground, the point is lost; if after it has touched the ground, the point shall be counted. In case of a let, the service or stroke counts for nothing, and the server shall serve again. A let does not annul a previous fault.

17. It is a good return—

- (a) If a ball touch the net or post, provided that it passes over either and drops into the Court;
- (b) If a ball, served or returned, drop into the proper Court and screw or be blown back over the net, and the player whose turn it is to strike reach over the net and play the ball, provided that neither he nor any part of his clothes or racket touch the net, and that the stroke be otherwise good;
- (c) If a ball be returned outside the post, either above or below the level of the top of the net, even though it touch the post, provided that it drop into the proper Court;
- (d) If a player's racket pass over the net after he has returned the ball, provided the ball pass over the net before being played and be properly returned;
- (e) If a player succeed in returning a ball, served or in play, which strikes a ball lying in the Court.

18. The Server wins a stroke if the Striker-out volley the service, or fail to return the service or the ball in-play (except in the case of a let), or return the service or ball in-play so that it drop outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's Court, or otherwise lose a stroke, as provided by Law 20.

19. The Striker-out wins a stroke if the Server serve two consecutive faults, or fail to return the ball in-play (except in the case of a let), or return the ball in-play so that it drop outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's Court, or otherwise lose a stroke, as provided by Law 20.

20. Either player loses a stroke if the ball in-play touch him or anything that he wears or carries, except his racket in the act of striking, or if he volley the ball (unless he thereby makes a good return) no matter whether he is standing within the precincts of the court or outside them; or if he touch or strike the ball in-play with his racket more than

once consecutively ; or if he or his racket (in his hand or otherwise) touch the net or any of its supports while the ball is in-play ; or if he volley the ball before it has passed the net.

21. On either player winning his first stroke, the score is called 15 for that player ; on either player winning his second stroke, the score is called 30 for that player ; on either player winning his third stroke, the score is called 40 for that player ; and the fourth stroke won by either player is scored game for that player ; except as below :—

If both players have won three strokes, the score is called deuce ; and the next stroke won by either player is scored advantage for that player. If the same player win the next stroke, he wins the game ; if he lose the next stroke, the score is again called deuce ; and so on until either player win the two strokes immediately following the score at deuce, when the game is scored for that player.

22. The player who first wins six games wins a set ; except as below :—

If both players win five games, the score is called games-all ; and the next game won by either player is scored advantage-game for that player. If the same player win the next game, he wins the set ; if he lose the next game, the score is again called games-all ; and so on until either player win the two games immediately following the score of games-all, when he wins the set.

NOTE.—Players may agree not to play advantage-sets, but to decide the set by one game after arriving at the score of games-all.

23. The players shall change sides at the end of the first, third, and every subsequent alternate game of each set, and at the end of each set, unless the number of games in each set be even. It shall, however, be open to the players by mutual consent and notification to the Umpire before the opening of the second game of the match to change sides instead at the end of every set, until the odd and concluding set, in which they shall change sides at the end of the first, third, and every subsequent alternate game of such set.

24. When a series of sets is played, the player who was Server in the last game of one set, shall be Striker-out in the first game of the next.

#### ODDS

25. Odds are received in each group of six games, in the first place, in the *earliest* possible *even* games ; that is to say, a receiver of one-sixth receives a stroke in the second game of each group of six ; a receiver of two-sixths, in the second and fourth games ; and a receiver of three-sixths, in the second, fourth, and sixth games.

When the even games are exhausted, odds are then received in the *earliest* possible *odd* games ; that is to say, a receiver of four-sixths

receives his strokes, over and above a receiver of three-sixths, in the first game of each group of six; and a receiver of five-sixths, in the first and third games.

The positions in which strokes are received are shown in the following table :

	1st Game.	2nd Game.	3rd Game.	4th Game.	5th Game.	6th Game.
$\frac{1}{6}$ of 15		15				
$\frac{2}{6}$ of 15		15		15		
$\frac{3}{6}$ of 15		15		15		15
$\frac{4}{6}$ of 15	15	15		15		15
$\frac{5}{6}$ of 15	15	15	15	15		

EXAMPLE.—A player receiving four-sixths of fifteen receives nothing in the third and fifth games, and fifteen in the first, second, fourth, and sixth games of a set.

NOTE.—The table is not carried beyond the sixth game, as in the next and every succeeding six games the odds recur in the same positions.

The above odds may be given in augmentation of other received odds.

Fifteen is one stroke given at the beginning of every game of a set.

Thirty is two strokes given at the beginning of every game of a set.

Forty is three strokes given at the beginning of every game of a set.

26. Odds are owed in each group of six games, in the first place, in the *latest* possible *odd* games; that is to say, an *ower* of one-sixth owes a stroke in the fifth game of each group of six; an *ower* of two-sixths, in the fifth, and third games; and an *ower* of three-sixths, in the fifth, third, and first games.

When the odd games are exhausted, odds are then owed in the *latest* possible *even* games; that is to say, an *ower* of four-sixths owes his strokes, over and above an *ower* of three-sixths, in the sixth game of each group of six; and an *ower* of five-sixths, in the sixth and fourth games.

The position in which strokes are owed are shown in the following table :

	1st Game.	2nd Game.	3rd Game.	4th Game.	5th Game.	6th Game.
4 of 15					15	
3 of 15			15		15	
2 of 15	15		15		15	
1 of 15	15		15		15	15
0 of 15	15		15	15	15	15

EXAMPLE.—A player owing two-sixths of fifteen would owe fifteen in the third and fifth games, and nothing in the first, second, fourth, and sixth games.

NOTE.—The table is not carried beyond the sixth game, as in the next and every succeeding six games the odds recur in the same positions.

The above odds may be owed in augmentation of other owed odds.

Fifteen is one stroke owed at the beginning of every game of a set.

Thirty is two strokes owed at the beginning of every game of a set.

Forty is three strokes owed at the beginning of every game of a set.

### THE THREE-HANDED AND FOUR-HANDED GAMES

27. The above laws shall apply to the three-handed and four-handed games, except as below.

28. For the three-handed and four-handed games, the Court is 36 feet in width. Within the side-lines, at a distance of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet from them, and parallel with them, are drawn the service-side-lines. In other respects the Court is similar to that which is described in Law 1.

29. In the three-handed game, the single player shall serve in every alternate game.

30. In the four-handed game, the pair who have the right to serve in the first game may decide which partner shall do so, and the opposing pair may decide similarly for the second game. The partner of the player who served in the first game shall serve in the third; and the

partner of the player who served in the second game shall serve in the fourth, and so on in the same order in all the subsequent games of a set.

31. The players shall take the service alternately throughout each game; no player shall receive or return a service delivered to his partner; and the order of service and of striking-out, once arranged, shall not be altered, nor shall the Striker-out change Courts to receive the service before the end of the set.

32. The ball served must drop within the service-line, half-court-line, and service-side-line, of the Court, which is diagonally opposite to that from which it was served, or upon any such line.

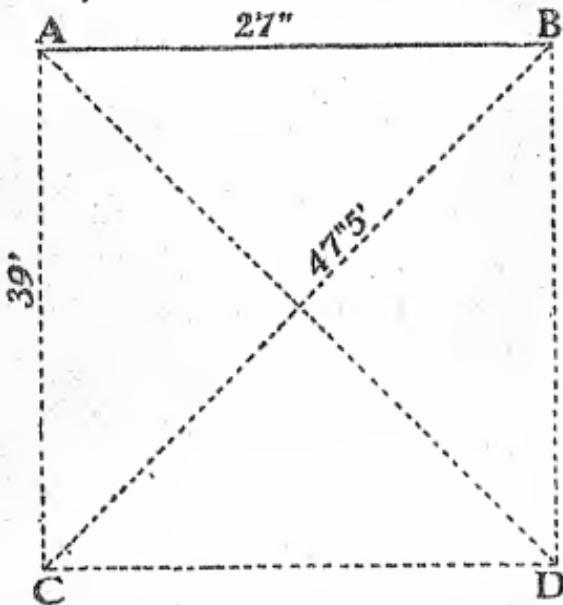
33. It is a *fault* if the ball do not drop as provided in Law 32, or if it touch the Server's partner, or anything that he wears or carries. If, however, the ball in service strike either the striker-out or his partner the server wins the stroke.

34. If a player serve out of his turn, the Umpire, as soon as the mistake is discovered by himself or by one of the players, shall direct the player to serve who ought to have served; but all strokes scored, and any fault served before such discovery, shall be reckoned. If a game shall have been completed before such discovery, then the service in the next alternate game shall be delivered by the partner of the player who served out of his turn; and so on in regular rotation.

## HOW TO MARK OUT A COURT

IN marking out a Court the most essential point is that it should be accurately squared. This may best be done as follows:—

Fix two points, A and B, 27 feet apart. These are the extremities of the net line of your Court. Fasten the end of a lawn tennis tape



measure at A, and hold it at the measurement 39 feet. Then fix another tape measure on point B, and hold it at the 47 feet 5 inches mark. Hold both measures firmly in the left hand, with the 39 feet and the 47 feet 5 inches marks coinciding. Then step back until the tapes are taut, taking care that they do not slip in the left hand. This will determine point "C." Reverse the tapes and perform the same operation on the other side. You have point "D." Then A, B, C, D are the corners of one-half of a single Court. Measure similarly on the other side of A and B, which will give the outside corners of the other half. The measurements and marking of a double Court can be seen from the plan given opposite.

36 Feet

44 ft

78 Feet

21 Feet

13½ Feet

21 Feet

78 Feet

13½ Feet

44 ft

## INCEPTION OF THE DAVIS CUP

OFFICIAL negotiations in connexion with an international match between England and America appear to have been opened up by the receipt of a letter from Dr. Dwight, president of the United States National Lawn Tennis Association, by Mr. Herbert Chipp in the summer of 1897. This letter was read at a Council Meeting of the British Lawn Tennis Association on June 9 of the same year, when the following Resolution was adopted :—

That it is desirable in the interests of lawn tennis that a match be arranged between the United Kingdom and the United States under Association auspices.

Mr. W. H. Collins, then Secretary of the L.T.A., accordingly placed himself in communication with Dr. Dwight, who replied as follows :—

*(Letter from Dr. Dwight to Mr. W. H. Collins)*

“WOODS HALL,

MASS., June 21st, 1897

“DEAR SIR,—Your letter of June 10th just received. I am somewhat at a loss to know how to answer it. I wrote to Chipp as an old friend, who was probably in a position to know that players of the first rank would be likely to come over to a few of our tournaments if some allowance for expenses was made.

“Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to have the British L.T.A. send over two, three or possibly four players for an international match and to play in certain tournaments, especially the Championships. Next year we might in return send our players to England under similar conditions.

“It seemed to me, when I wrote before, that the time was so late that the formal correspondence between the two Associations could hardly take place. What we should like would be to have (say) three players come over in time to play for the Eastern Doubles Championship and incidentally the Singles at Longwood (Boston), July 26; at Hoboken, August 2, in an invitation tournament where the best players of each country could play an international match if it can be arranged; and at Newport, August 17, in the Singles Championship. And should an English pair win the Eastern Doubles at Longwood, it would be called upon to play the winners of the Western Doubles tournament, the winners of that match playing the Doubles Champions of last year.

"Time is therefore of great importance to us. I therefore ask officially your assistance and that of your Council in bringing about some such arrangement, and I beg to assure you of my readiness to enter into any scheme by which alternate international matches may be arranged between the two Associations later.

"The U.S.N.L.T.A. will pay £40 for each of these men for steamship passages and £10 for railway fares (making £50 apiece) provided that they compete in the above-named tournaments or in others that might be substituted for them should any unforeseen accident arise.

"I own I have always had great doubts of the propriety of paying expenses of players, but to the extent named we are ready to go.

"May I beg you to bring the matter to a point as soon as possible, as your men should sail July 17th. Please telegraph me 'Dwight, Somerset Club, Boston,' after your meeting on July 1st, at my expense.

"We are very anxious that your players should come this year. I have tried to make myself clear as to points of importance to us, and I trust you will see your way to arranging the matter.—Believe me, with much respect, Yours truly,

"JAMES DWIGHT,  
"Pres. U.S.N.L.T. Association

The above letter was duly considered at the Council Meeting on July 1, when it was decided on various grounds—chiefly, I believe, financial—not to send an official team to America that season.<sup>1</sup>

The next step was taken at a Council Meeting held on November 3, 1897, at which Mr. Collins reported a proposal that had been made for the visit of an American team to England, and it was considered desirable that arrangements should be made for their reception and a fund raised, not exceeding £160, for the purpose of meeting the expense. A Committee of Management<sup>2</sup> was accordingly appointed, which six weeks later recommended to the Council that the international match between England and America should follow the Championships at Wimbledon. But matters fell through unexpectedly. W. A. Larned wrote from America, in April 1898, that while the arrangements made suited their views, neither himself nor R. D. Wren would be able to come that year, and he was afraid America could not raise a representative team.

The matter remained in abeyance until March 7, 1900, when a letter was read at a Council Meeting from Dr. Dwight to Mr. G. R. Mewburn, then, as now, Hon. Secretary of the L.T.A. I quote the letter as I did the other, because I believe that many readers will

<sup>1</sup> A British team consisting of H. S. Mahony, Dr. W. V. Eaves and H. A. Nisbet proceeded to America unofficially in 1897.

<sup>2</sup> Consisting of Hon. R. P. Bowes Lyon, H. W. W. Wilberforce, W. H. Collins, H. S. Mahony and H. A. Nisbet.

be interested to follow the steps which led to the inception of the Davis Cup.

*(Letter from Dr. Dwight to Mr. G. R. Mewburn)*

"225, BEACON STREET,

"BOSTON, 16th Jan. 1900

"DEAR SIR,—I beg to call your attention, as Secretary of the L.T.A., to an experiment which we are making that will, I hope, increase the interest in lawn tennis. One of our players here has offered us a Cup, to be a sort of International Challenge Cup. I enclose the conditions<sup>1</sup> in a rough form. I trust that we shall both take a deep interest in them for many years to come.

"I am very anxious that some of your better players should make us a visit this summer, and I hope that, should they come, your Association will see its way to challenge for the Cup. You can easily understand that we thought it necessary to require the Governing Association of a country to make the challenge to prevent a series of stray challenges from players good and bad who might be coming to spend a month here. In yachting, the expense prevents the possibility of too much competition for the right to challenge. In lawn tennis it would be different.

"I hope, as I said before, that the scheme will prove a success. It might do a great deal for the game here, and possibly even with you it might be a help. In any case I trust you will do what you can to give us a lead in the matter.

"Please accept my sincere sympathy and good wishes in your present troubles!<sup>2</sup> I have eaten your salt too often not to feel very strongly for the anxiety that you all must feel.—With every wish for better times, Believe me, Very truly Yours,

"JAMES DWIGHT,

"*Pres. U.S.N.L.T. Assoc.*

Thus was the gauntlet thrown down and the Davis Cup inaugurated. The Council of the L.T.A. unanimously decided that the "British Isles"<sup>3</sup> should send a challenge, and a committee was formed to draw up regulations,<sup>4</sup> and submit them to Dr. Dwight and the U.S.N.L.T.A. for approval.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 319.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the Boer War, then proceeding.

<sup>3</sup> Since amended. See p. 320.

## ORIGINAL CONDITIONS OF THE DAVIS CUP

*(Submitted by Dr. Dwight, President of the United States N.L.T.A., to the Secretary of the Lawn Tennis Association, 16th January 1900)*

CUP to be given to the Committee of the U.S.N.L.T.A. under the following conditions, which can be changed by a two-third vote of the Committee of the Governing Association of the country where the Cup is held, with the consent of the donor and upon his death, then and thereafter with the consent of the U.S.N.L.T.A. Challenge for the Cup may be refused if not received before 1st May of each year by the Secretary of the Governing Association of the country where the Cup is held.

A challenge must be sent by the Secretary of the Governing Association of the country challenging, who must give proof, if necessary, that the challengers are citizens of the said country, are members of some club belonging to the said Association and are amateurs in good standing.

In the event of two challenges the Committee of the Governing Association of the challenged country shall have the right to decide which to accept.

Matches to consist of four single matches between two players of each country and one double match; double teams not necessarily comprised of the same players as the singles.

All matches to be the best of five sets (vantage). The country winning three of five matches to hold the Cup.

Laws governing the championship of the country where the Cup is held to govern the Cup matches. Composition of teams need not be made known till one fortnight before the matches.

If at any time five years shall elapse without a challenge, the Cup is to be returned to the donor.

Agreement to be signed by the Association of the country winning the Cup to abide by conditions or return the Cup to the U.S.L.T. Association.

## REGULATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL LAWN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP

1. The Competition shall be called "The International Lawn Tennis Championship," and shall be open to any Nation which has a recognized Lawn Tennis Association or Corresponding Organisation ; and, for the purposes of these Regulations, Australia with New Zealand, the British Isles, British South Africa, Canada, India, and the United States of America shall, amongst others, be regarded as separate Nations.

2. The Nation for the time-being holding the International Lawn Tennis Championship shall hereinafter be termed "The Champion Nation."

3. The Competition shall take place in accordance with the following Regulations, and, except in so far as may be agreed upon by the competing Nations for their own tie, with the Laws and Regulations of the game for the time being sanctioned by the Champion Nation.

4. The management of the Competition shall be entrusted to a Committee, hereafter termed "The Committee of Management," which shall be appointed annually by the Lawn Tennis Association or Corresponding Organisation of the Champion Nation.

5. The Committee of Management shall make all arrangements for the preliminary Tie or Ties (if any) of the Competition where such preliminary Tie or Ties are to be played in the Country of the Champion Nation, and also for the Challenge Tie, and its decision in respect of all such arrangements shall be final. The Committee of Management shall also have power to depute to others, in any preliminary Tie or Ties, the making of all or any of such arrangements as may be deemed necessary.

6. Any Nation wishing to compete shall give notice to the Secretary of the Lawn Tennis Association or Corresponding Organisation of the Champion Nation, so that it shall reach him not later than the first Monday in March of the year in which the Competition is to take place. Should more than one Nation challenge, they shall compete among themselves for the right to play the Champion Nation in the Challenge Tie. The Draw, at which each challenging Nation may be represented, shall be made by the Committee of Management on the day following the first Monday in March and particulars shall be notified to the respective Secretaries for the time being of the Lawn Tennis Associations or Corresponding Organisations of the several competing Nations,

with an intimation of the latest date by which the Tie or Ties shall be concluded. Failure to conclude a Tie by the date fixed by the Committee of Management shall render both Sides liable to be scratched, unless in the opinion of the Committee of Management the weather, or other unavoidable hindrance, shall have made completion impossible. Competing Nations shall arrange among themselves for the playing of their respective Ties upon a ground or grounds, and upon a date or dates convenient to those concerned; but, in the event of an agreement not being arrived at, the preliminary Tie or Ties shall be played in the Country of the Champion Nation upon a ground or grounds, and upon a date or dates, to be fixed upon by the Committee of Management.

7. When gate-money shall be taken, one half of the profit shall belong to the visiting Nation; or, in the case of a Tie being played on neutral ground, one-third each to the visiting Nations, and the remaining fraction of profit in each case shall go to the Nation in whose Country the Tie shall be played.

8. The Challenge Tie shall be played in the Country of the Champion Nation at a date and upon a ground to be agreed upon by common consent. In the event of an agreement not being arrived at, the fixing of the date and ground shall be submitted to Arbitration.

9. A player shall be qualified to represent a Nation if he shall have been born in that Nation, or shall have resided therein for at least two years immediately preceding a Tie, provided always that he be a *bona fide* Amateur; but no one shall be entitled to play for more than one Nation in this Competition during the same year. During the time that a player may be qualifying to play for a Nation under the residential qualification, he may play for the Nation for which he shall have been last previously qualified.

10. The Lawn Tennis Association or Corresponding Organisation of each of the Nations concerned shall appoint a Captain of its side. In default of such appointment a side shall choose its own Captain.

11. For each Tie a Referee, from whose decision there shall be no appeal, shall be appointed by common consent of the Captains of the competing Sides. He shall have power to appoint Umpires. He shall decide any point of law which an Umpire may profess himself unable to decide, or which may be referred to him on appeal from the decision of an Umpire by the players. He shall decide, if he be called upon to decide by the Captain of either Side, whether or not a Match or Matches shall be stopped owing to the state of the courts, the state of the weather, darkness, or other unavoidable hindrance.

12. (a) Each competing Nation shall, twenty-one days before the date fixed for the commencement of a Tie, nominate to the Committee of Management not more than four players, without specifying who shall play in Singles and Doubles. Different players, however, may be nominated by a Nation for different Ties.

(b) Each Captain shall, twenty-four hours before the time fixed for the commencement of play in each Contest, give notice of the composition of his Team to the Executive Committee, and his Team shall be selected from the four players previously nominated for the Tie. Such selection by the Captain, however, shall be regarded as solely for the convenience of the Executive Committee, and may be varied by him before the commencement of play.

(c) For the Second Round of the Singles Contest in any Tie the Referee may sanction the substitution of another of the players nominated by a nation for that Tie in the place of any player, who, in the opinion of the Referee, is incapacitated by illness, accident, or other unavoidable hindrance; provided that such substitute shall not be the player who has already competed in the Singles Contest.

13. The time of cessation of play shall be fixed before the commencement of each day's play by the Captains of the opposing Sides, or by the Referee if they shall disagree. It shall be the duty of the Referee to stop play when this time arrives; provided, nevertheless, that he may extend the time with the consent of the Captains of the opposing Sides. A player shall not be called upon to play more than one Match a day, except with the unanimous consent of the Captains of the opposing Sides and the majority of the Executive Committee.

14. Each Tie shall be decided by the combined results of Singles and Doubles, and the Side which shall win the majority of Matches shall be the winner of a Tie.

15. In the Singles, each Team shall, subject to Regulation 12, Clause (c), consist of two players, who shall play each against each of the opposing Team the best of five advantage sets. The order of play and courts shall be decided by lot. In the Doubles, each Team shall consist of two players, who shall play against the opposing Team the best of five advantage sets.

16. Unless otherwise arranged by the unanimous consent of the Captains of the opposing Sides and the majority of the Executive Committee, the Doubles shall take place between the two rounds of the Singles Contest. If, however, a player be chosen for both the Singles and Doubles Contests, and if, by a change in the above arrangements, he be called upon to play his two Singles' Matches on consecutive days, then there shall be an interval of one day between the second and the third day's play. Provided, nevertheless, that if there be an interval between the first and second day's play, either from postponement, arrangement, or the interval of a Sunday, there shall not be an interval between the second and third day's play.

17. If any player be absent when called upon to play by the Referee, the opposing Side shall be entitled to three love sets.

18. Any competing Nation whose Lawn Tennis Association or Corresponding Organisation, or whose Representatives shall fail to

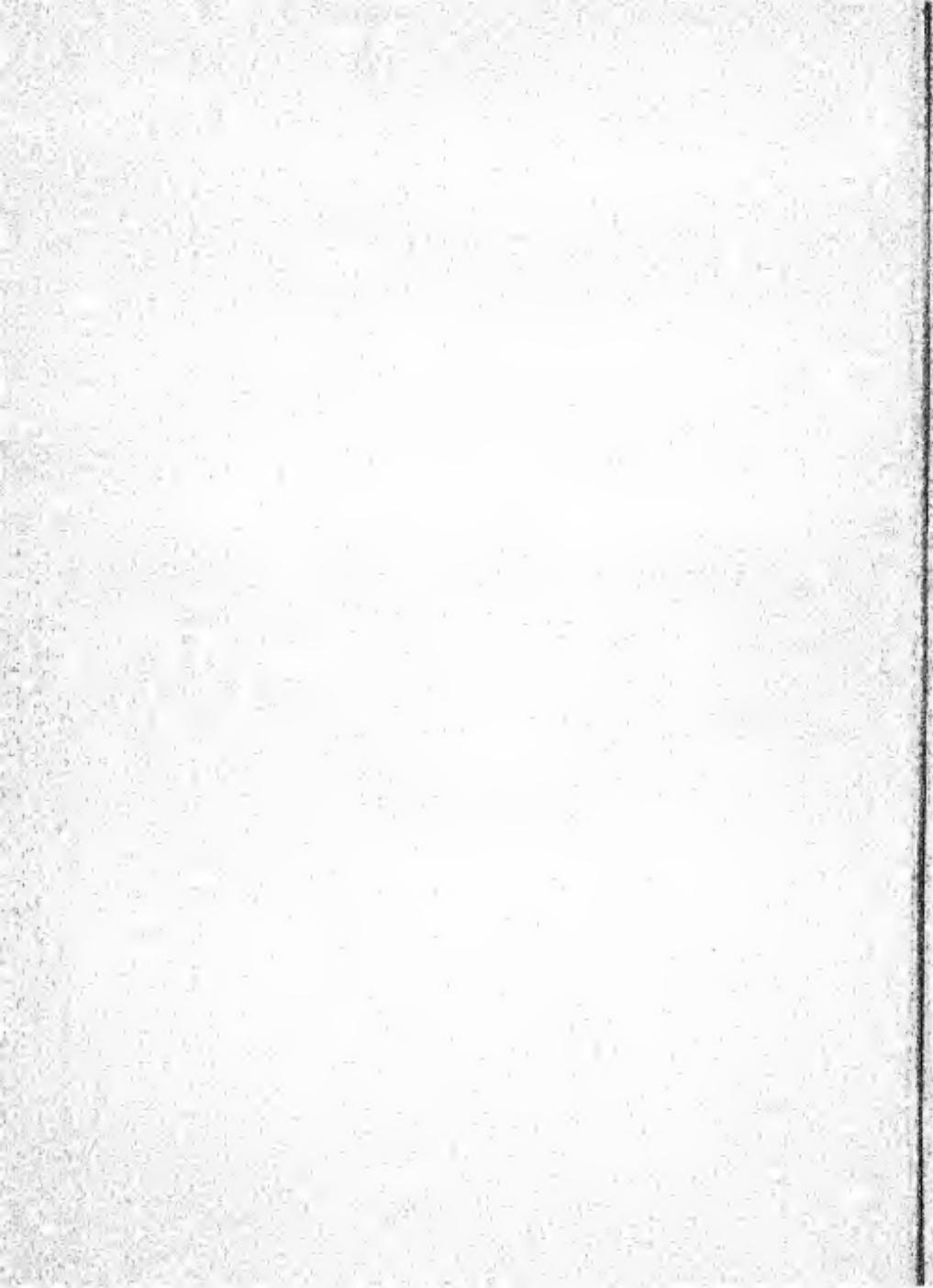
conform to the above Regulations, may be disqualified by the Committee of Management in respect of the Competition for the year wherein such failure shall occur.

19. Winners of a preliminary Tie shall notify the result without delay to the Committee of Management, by telegram, which shall be confirmed by letter.

20. For purposes of correspondence and the giving of notices required by these regulations the Secretary for the time being of the Lawn Tennis Association or Corresponding Organisation of the Champion Nation shall be regarded as representing the Committee of Management.

21. The above Regulations shall be binding upon the Nations concerned, and shall not be altered except with the consent of two-thirds of the Associations or Corresponding Organisations whose Nations shall have from time to time competed and who shall record their votes.

NOTE.—In the above Regulations, one Nation playing against another is regarded as a "Tie"; Singles and Doubles are regarded as separate "Contests"; and the best of five advantage sets is regarded as a "Match." The players in Singles and Doubles are regarded as separate "Teams"; and the players in the combined contests as a "Side."



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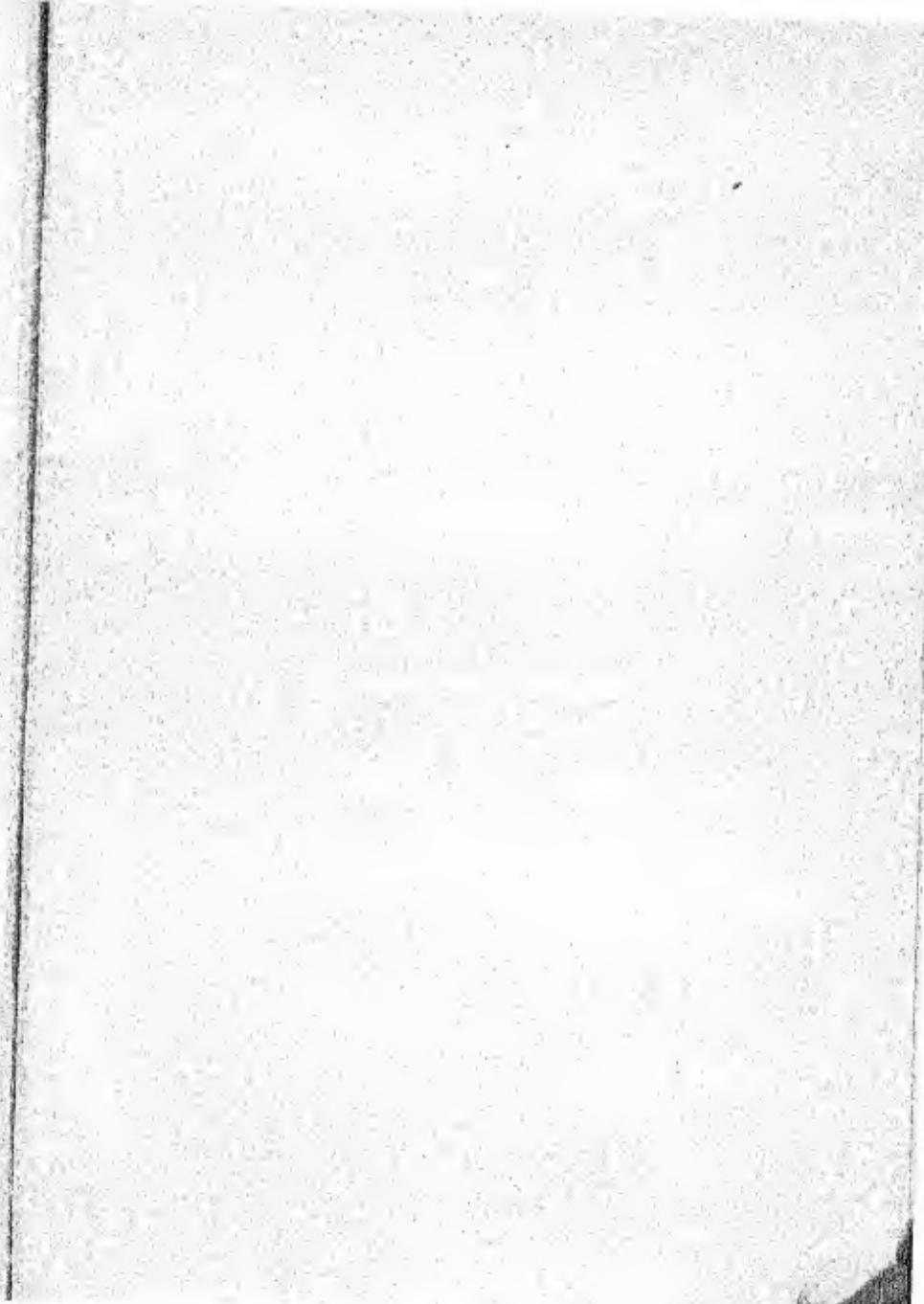
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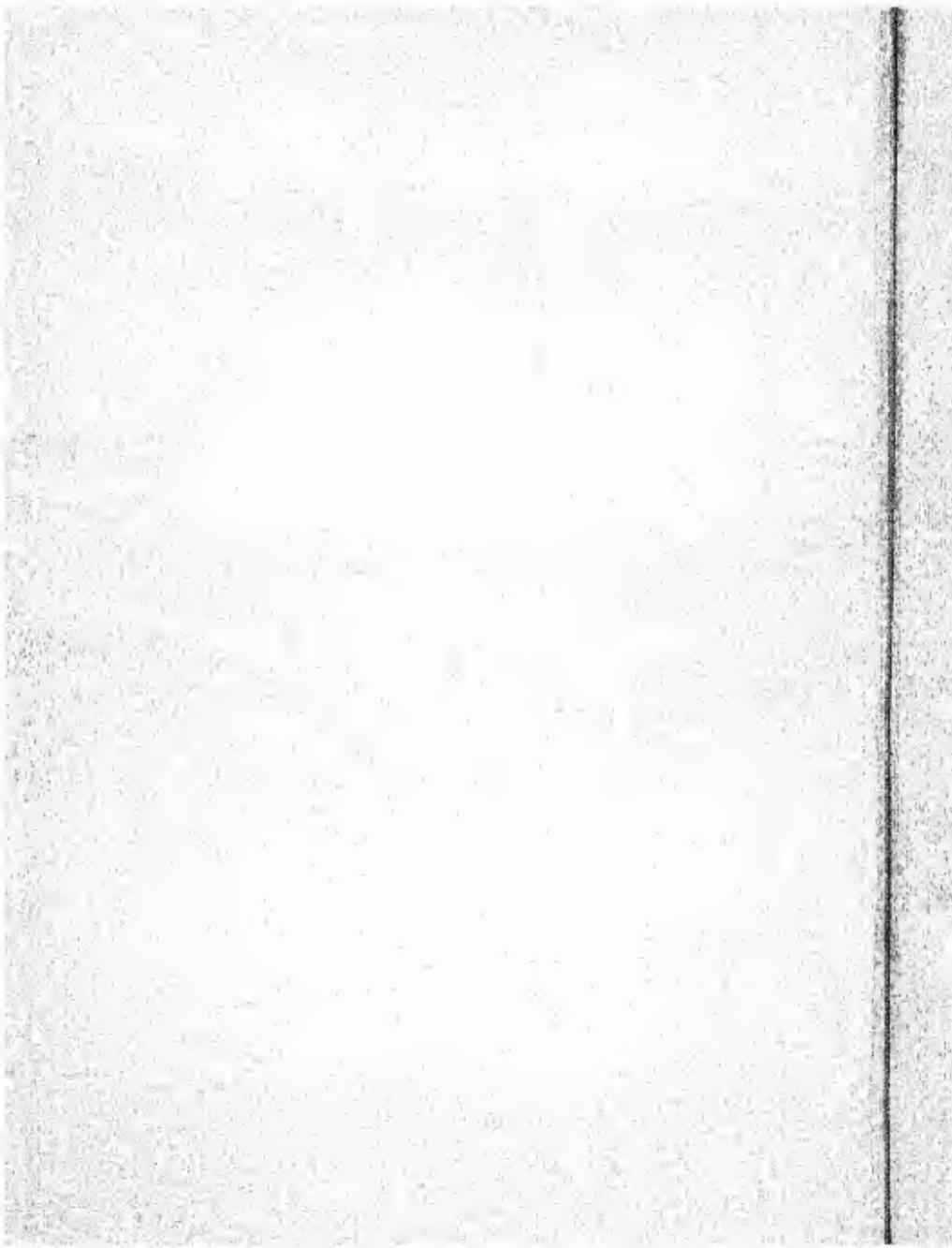
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Norris (W. E.). HIS GRACE. GILES INGBLEV. THE CREDIT OF THE COUNTY. LORD LEONARD THE LUCKLESS. MATTHEW AUSTIN. CLARISSA FURIOSA.

Oliphant (Mrs.). THE LADY'S WALK. SIR ROBERT'S FORTUNE. THE PRODIGALS. THE TWO MARYS.

Oppenheim (E. P.). MASTER OF MEN.

Parker (Gilbert). THE POMP OF THE LAVYLLETTES. WHEN VALMOND CAME TO PONTIAC. THE TRAIL OF THE SWORD.

Pemberton (Max). THE FOOTSTEPS OF A THRONE. I CROWN THEE KING.

Philpotts (Eden). THE HUMAN BOY. CHILDREN OF THE MIST. THE POACHER'S WIFE. THE RIVER.

'Q' (A. T. Quiller Couch). THE WHITE WOLF.

Ridge (W. Pett). A SON OF THE STATE. LOST PROPERTY. GEORGE and THE GENERAL. ERE.

Russell (W. Clark). ABANDONED. A MARRIAGE AT SEA. MY DANISH SWEETHEART. HIS ISLAND PRINCESS.

Sergeant (Adeline). THE MASTER OF BEECHWOOD. BARBARA'S MONEY. THE YELLOW DIAMOND. THE LOVE THAT OVERCAME.

Sidgwick (Mrs. Alfred). THE KING-MAN.

Surtees (R. S.). HANDLEY CROSS. MR. SPONGE'S SPORTING TOUR. ASH MAMMA.

Walford (Mrs. L. B.). MR. SMITH. COUSINS. THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER. TROUBLESOSE DAUGHTERS.

Wallace (General Lew). BEN-HUR. THE FAIR GOD.

Watson (H. B. Marriott). THE ADVENTURERS.

Weekes (A. B.). PRISONERS OF WAR.

Wells (H. G.). THE SEA LADY.

White (Percy). A PASSIONATE PILGRIM.